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YOUR COMPLETE ARTS XPERIENCE

June 2026 || Vol. 8, Issue 6



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Shemekia Copeland

An Interview by Rob Smittix

RRX: I'm excited to be talking with you today. I saw that you're playing the America's 250th Birthday at the Bruce Springsteen Center for American Music at Monmouth University, which I didn't even know existed until now.

SC: It's just opening.

RRX: Oh! The more you know. That's cool, that's gonna be something.

SC: Yes, there are so many amazing artists performing on that, so I feel like it's gonna be a great hang. So, I'm definitely looking forward to that.

RRX: I don't know if it's sold out yet, but I'm sure it will.

SC: Oh, it sold out within an hour, I think.

RRX: That's pretty cool, I thought that was the case. People were pretty quick to get those tickets, and I don't blame them.

SC: Mhm, yeah.

RRX: So, music-wise, we have a blues show on our radio station, and I mentioned to the host today that I was gonna be talking to you, and he was like ... oh man, Shemekia's a legend. You've been called that, I'm sure, quite a few times, but how does that make you feel?

SC: It's hilarious to me to be called that. I'm only 47, you know? To me, that word's for older people, but I appreciate people.

RRX: Right.

SC: But I really do appreciate people thinking of me in that way because I certainly and definitely want to make it there at some point, you know what I mean?

RRX: Well, I appreciate the humbleness, but it looks like you earned it pretty quickly. But yes, you are still a very young woman. I was just 47 myself, just turned 48, and I don't know about you, but I'm definitely not rounding up to 50.

SC: You know? I'm looking forward to it, it's so funny to me because age is not a thing for me. But I'll tell you, a weird thing happened ... last November, my brother turned 50, my older brother, and it was a weird experience because I was just like ... oh my God, we're grown-ups now, you know?

(Both Laugh)

SC: And it was just like ... we're grown-ups. Oh my God, you know? But I didn't think that at 30, I didn't think that at 40, but we got right there at 50 and I'm like holy s***, we're grown-ups. We done grew up. And it was just a weird feeling, but not like old, not sad about it, but just like, wow! We're adults.

RRX: I get that. Being 48, I'm a very young grandfather. I got three grandkids because I started early. It's kind of cool, but I still never really felt like I was a man until I was 30. And then I'm like ... alright, well I'm a man now but definitely hadn't felt old yet. Yeah, let's just embrace this thing!

SC: We gotta embrace it. Look, it's a good thing. I actually have a grandbaby too, because of my husband. I have two stepdaughters; I adopted them. They're my babies now, too, but I have a little grandbaby because of them. I'm so excited about that too. So, yeah, it's fun. But I also have a 9-year-old, so ...

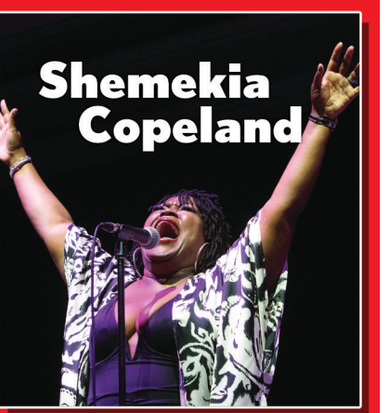
RRX: Oh, okay, so you're still doing it. Yeah, my youngest is 18, and he's giving us a run for our money.

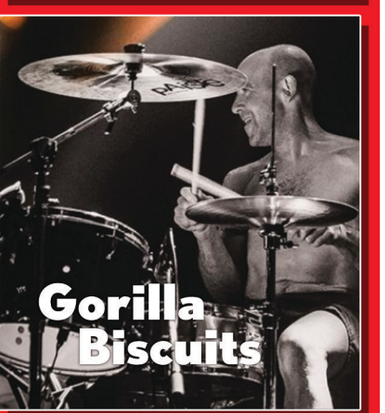
SC: Yeah, they do that, they do that.

RRX: He's a senior, and he's been skipping school almost every day. My mom literally said I will give him $1000 if he doesn't skip for the rest of the year and he blew it already.

Continued on page 5...

THIS MONTH'S FEATURES







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RRX: Like, you can't even offer the kid $1000 to do the bare minimum.

SC: Oh my gosh, he's just like, I don't wanna do this. I don't wanna be bothered with this school thing.

RRX: It's like bribery is not even working anymore. But having grandkids, though, is awesome. I didn't know it was gonna be so cool. People told me they're like ... you're gonna love them more than your own kids, and I'm like, nah. Now I'm like, maybe I do.

SC: Yeah, how is that possible? But it's like, you know? You get to do all the cool stuff without any responsibility. That's awesome, you know what I mean?

RRX: I do, and when it gets tiring, well, now you can have 'em back.

SC: Yeah, exactly.

RRX: Well, that's awesome, Shemekia. I just wanted a chance to talk to you. I appreciate your time. Anything else you'd like to say to the people?

SC: If you wanna have a great time, come on out and hang out with us.

RRX: Amen to that.

A Big Gay Market

A Big Gay Market is a designated intentional and affirmative space for LGBTQIA+ individuals + allies, especially for those in our community who have intersecting marginalized identities, to join together in queer and trans joy for a cause!

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A Look Back: Talking Heads @ SUNY Albany's Page Hall, 1977

By Mike Stampalia

Last fall, former Talking Heads frontman David Byrne performed at Proctors as part of his "Who Is the Sky?" tour, and it commanded the highest-ticketed prices in that storied venue's history. In March 2023, Heads keyboardist/guitarist Jerry Harrison played Empire Live alongside essential TH contributor and touring musician Adrian Belew, making for one of the most talked-about area shows of the year. Byrne returns to the area this September, this time at SPAC, where the top ticket price is $509, and that's before the joy that is Live Nation/Ticketmaster's "surge pricing" and "aftermarket offerings" kick in.

This all happens because Talking Heads are correctly lauded as a legendary, groundbreaking band, one of the best of all time. A band that was post-punk before punk had gotten out of the Bowery.

But it wasn't always that way.

Talking Heads released their first album, "Talking Heads: 77" on September 16, 1977, and two months later visited our area for the very first time at SUNY Albany's Page Hall, on November 17, 1977. They opened for the Good Rats, a band from Long Island that had been around for 13 years at that point. The review was not what you would expect, with 20/20 hindsight:

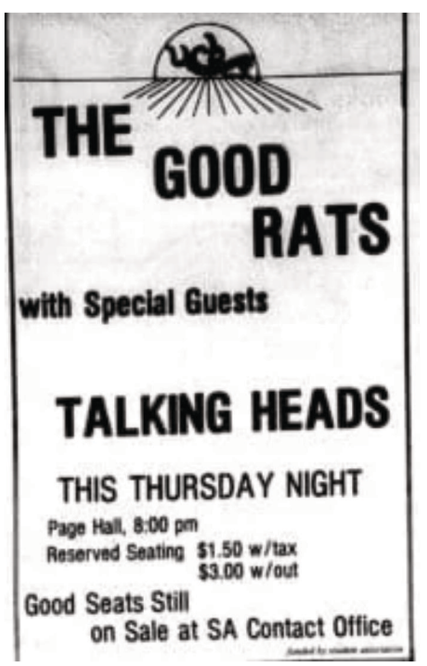
No Rats, but still good Rats were at Page Hall last night, where loud Rock and Roll abounded in the form of the Good Rats, the kings of Long Island Party Rock. More than 700 fans were greated with tumultous volumes of sound and energy not normally found in the Albany Area.

The Good Rats took the audience on an obsene, fun filled adventure through the land of the buzzing eardrum, while the warm up band, the Talking Heads, took us to the limit of migrane headaches and queasy stomachs, with their own form of punk Rock (or as Good Rats' rythm guitarist Mickey Marchella called it, "skunk rock"), complete with pounding rythms and aching heads.

They looked harmless enough on the outside, but on the inside they were every bit the punks they proffessed to be. Incredibly drone, generating enough noise to cut through a jet blast, caressing our ears with tear jerkers such as "Hot Love" and "Psycho Killer", and screaming sweet nothings into our ears, the Talking Heads transformed into the "Screaming Lips", "causing the Rat fans to shout in disgust.

But the Heads took it as a compliment, for they returned to torment us again with an encore. If this is new wave, send me back out to see. I'll drown in "Black Sabbath" before I listen to this.

Source: Robert Gardner for the Albany Student Press, November 18, 1977




Credit: Jimmy DeSa

Talking with the Heads

The band was interviewed at Just a Song (record store) before the show:

The Talking Heads who wore the opening act for the Good Rats last night made an appearance at Just a Song Records yesterday afternoon to promote their new album, "Talking Heads 77."

The group consists of songwriter, lead singer and guitarist David Byrne, drummer Chris Frantz, Martina Weymouth on bass, and Jerry Harrison on keyboards and guitar.

ASP: Could you tell me some of the history of the band?

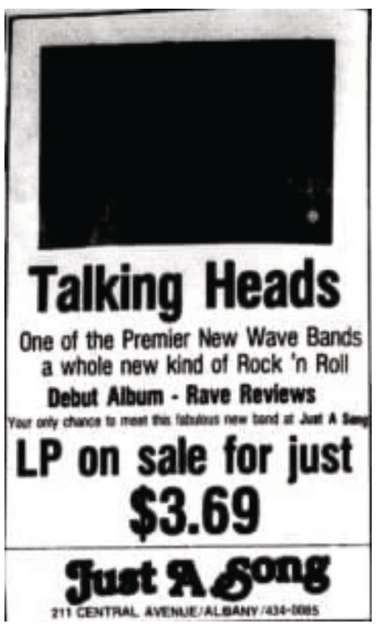
Martina Weymouth: The band had been together nearlythree years with the exception of Jerry. We played at CBGB's, the famed place. The next week there was a big thing in the Village Voice about the new rock and roll. After a lot of looking around we signed with Sire Records last November and Jerry joined us in time to record the album. Following that we toured Europe and were well enough received to be invited back.

ASP: You say you are not a "new wave" or punk rock band, how would you describe the Talking Heads?

Weymouth: The Ramones are our favorite new American band. We think it is very important to communicate to an audience in a sincere manner and we don't like huge stadiums and things. But all the audience has to do is listen to our sound and they can tell that we are not punk rock. People basically like to have a good time, and we like to think of ourselves as new, the newest thing.

ASP: I have read that you think a hit single is important, do you still feel that way?

Jerry Harrison: We'll just keep making records we like and if the programmers think one could be a hit we won't discourage them.



ASP: How did you get the name Talking Heads?

Harrison: A friend of ours who lives in Chicago now picked it out of T.V. Guide.

ASP: What are your musical influences?

Chris Frantz: When I was younger I didnt have a record collection, I listened to whatever was being played on the radio. In the car my parents didn't listen to the rock and roll stations but sometimes they did it just to shut me up! I heard stuff like "Flying Purple People Eater" and" Big Bad John,"" Duke of Earl" and Elvis. I liked *Trailer for Sale or Rent" and" Hit the Road Jack." "Blue Velvet" by Bobby Vinton. Until the Beatles came out and thats when I thought about being in Rock and Roll. At that time it was impossible, but now it is and it's fun.

ASP: What are your future plans?

Harrison: We will be playing in the U.S. until about Christmas and then we'll go to Europe and then we may start on another album and tour some more.

Source: Interview by Dennis Scheyer for the Albany Student Press, November 18, 1977

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Thanks For Asking

MTM Ghettyboii

RRX: Every artist's first song is a milestone. But so is the latest song. Describe the first song/album you recorded, and also the latest song/album you recorded; what are the differences?

Ghetty: the first record I created I was just testing the waters to figure out my sound. The latest record I recorded actually means a lot and I'm talking about what I actually went through and the sacrifices I've made to get to a certain point musically speaking.

RRX: Like songs, every artist has a unique feeling about their first show. What was your first show like? Was it your best show? If not, what was your best show like?

Ghetty: My first show was an amazing experience. I actually ended up going viral off my first performance and getting a whooping 10k plus views on Instagram when I posted it lol.

RRX: What was the very first reaction to your music, from the first person to ever hear so much as a practice jam or the demo of your first song?

Ghetty: If I'm not mistaken the very first person who gave me a reaction to my music was my father lol once he heard me get on that "Panda" instrumental by Desiigner he was like "yea you need to get in contact wit ya uncle" that's when my uncle put me in the studio.

RRX: What do you think is the most poorly understood thing about music, or the music you play?

Ghetty: I think the most poorly understood thing about music is the message the artists delivering to the people. Some people perceive it differently than others.

RRX: Sex, drugs, and rock and roll. Or so they say. Whether you're off the wagon, on it, or never been, there's something you got a thirst for. What are some of your basically harmless vices?

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RRX: Playing out is tricky because you never know what's going to happen when you get there. Sometimes everything goes wrong. What was your worst show like?

Ghetty: performing towards the end of my set and people started to walk out lol...I think this was in Vermont I believe.

RRX: Let's talk about your next project, your next few. Just not the ones you're working on now. The ones you have your eyes on for the future. What's coming to us?

Ghetty: A lot of club bangers! A lot of summer records to bop your heads to lol every project is going to be fiyah!





THE DANDY WARHOLS 2006 PHOTO CREDIT: NICOLE NOLAND

THE RECORD FILE

By Tony Mastrianni

The original owners of SUNDAZED RECORDS were from Coxsackie, NY, where the offices were located. The company was founded in 1989, sold in 2017, and is now part of the Exceleration family of labels. Sundazed is now based in Hillsborough, North Carolina, and they continue to reissue great vinyl records of rock, garage punk, jazz, sunshine pop, and everything weird and wonderful. The label is "Aces Up" among serious collectors, and you can purchase their product at independent record stores or search the label online and order directly. Kudos to this superb label for re-releasing so many outstanding vinyl records and for issuing numerous new former LP titles that continue to fascinate record aficionados.

THE RUNAWAYS (self-titled) LP. Well, you read here in March about FANNY's reissued album 'Mother's Pride;' now it is time to tell you that another great 70s all-women American rock band, The Runaways, are raised again. Originally issued and out of print, Sundazed has reissued it yet again – this time on blue vinyl. Joan Jett and Cherie Currie led this hard-driven, fresh array of electrically charged, frenetic vocals. "Cherry Bomb" literally exploded on the charts as a major single from this album. It was their first commercial hit. The girls could really kick it with their knee-high boots, slam-bam vocals, and high-energy electric guitar attack. They captivated audiences both in their recordings and in performance. Here, there are many great tracks. Cherie sang with power and vigor on "Secrets," and she and Joan whispered back and forth on the final track, "Dead End Justice." If you listened to Joan Jett and The Blackhearts but never listened to The Runaways, you are in for some high-powered sonic boom. And, I did not get to tell you how impressive Lita Ford is on guitar. This is a five-star record throughout! Now available in limited edition blue vinyl.

THE AMBOY DUKES 'JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE MIND' - LP: Ted Nugent was the center of the band, with his amazing guitar prowess, but the 1960's band was star-studded with other talented musicians, taking us on a psychedelic journey. Singer John Drake had a distinctive phrasing, and rhythm guitarist Steve Farmer wrote much of the material herein and played guitar adeptly. Known for the title track single, the album is loaded with mind-bending sounds. A powerhouse of psychedelia captured in the studio. One terrific album, from the 60's. Recorded with precision by producer Bob Shad. Wonderfully executed with some tinges of jazz. (Shad's main gig was his production of jazz albums). 4 STAR LP. Limited quantities still available.

Here are several other recommended SUNDAZED 60's reissued LP titles that you might want to consider buying before they are sold out:

PSYCHADELIC CLASSICS: EDENS CHILDREN self-titled; EDENS CHILDREN 'Sure Looks Real" w/ bonus tracks; (The aforementioned) THE AMBOY DUKES 'Journey To The Center Of the Mind' (hookah glass blue vinyl) **early Ted Nugent's band masterpiece; JOKER'S WILD 'Step Outside Your Mind' 2-LP; THE ORIENT EXPRESS self-titled (red and blue splatter color vinyl); THE SUPERFINE DANDELINE self-titled (blue vinyl); INTERNATIONAL SUBMARINE BAND 'Safe At Home' (featuring early Gram Parsons) in analog mono. All these reissues were from acclaimed '60s underground bands who were revolutionary in creating original psychedelic sounds. These rare commodities are now available. High-quality pressings, and they are reasonably priced. Act now, as quantities remain limited for these psych classics.

RECORD STORE DAY (RSD) was in April. SUNDAZED scored big once again. Try snagging these two RSD special releases: THE SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS 'Roasted Right' (expanded edition); and, DR. JOHN 'The Brightest Smile in Town' EP. Both are selling out quickly. Get them while they are still some available. You may also find these great scarce records on eBAY or DISCOGS.

Also, for RSD 'A JAZZ TRIBUTE TO PAVEMENT' (2-LP Gold colored vinyl. This contains a great batch of jazz from Sundazed, and a "must have" for jazz collectors! Experience a unique blend of jazz and alternative rock with 'Gold Soundz: A Jazz Tribute To Pavement'. This album features the exceptional talents of Reginald Veal, Carter James, Cyrus Chestnut, and Ali Jackson, re-interpreting classic standards. Pavement tracks in a fresh jazz style. Great for

parties or serious listening alike. Interpretations of classic jazz songs are reborn here.

And a few other titles that will appeal to collectors with limited quantities left: 'Blonde On A Bum Trick' soundtrack featuring Leslie West's first band, The Vagrants; a taste of psychedelia with 60's reissue of The Leaves 'All The Good That's Gathering'. Look for more coverage of this great indie label in the coming months.

DANDY WARHOLS 'PIN UPS' IMPRESSIVE NEW COVERS ALBUM!

From Beat The World/Little Cloud Records comes some British great gender defying rock music, thanks to Portland icons, The Dandy Warhols, who return with a razor new single, "LOVE SONG," an astounding cover version of the seminal track originally written and recorded by The Damned. Taken from the band's recently released new covers album "Love Song" captures the thrill of a band paying tribute to the song's wiry menace and sardonic bite not by imitation, but by embodiment – recalling the original spirit of late-'70s punk through their own unmistakable lens. This is a fascinating record from what I hear on the advance music download. It is a listener experience like no other – powerful interpretations reaching the hallmark of excellence.

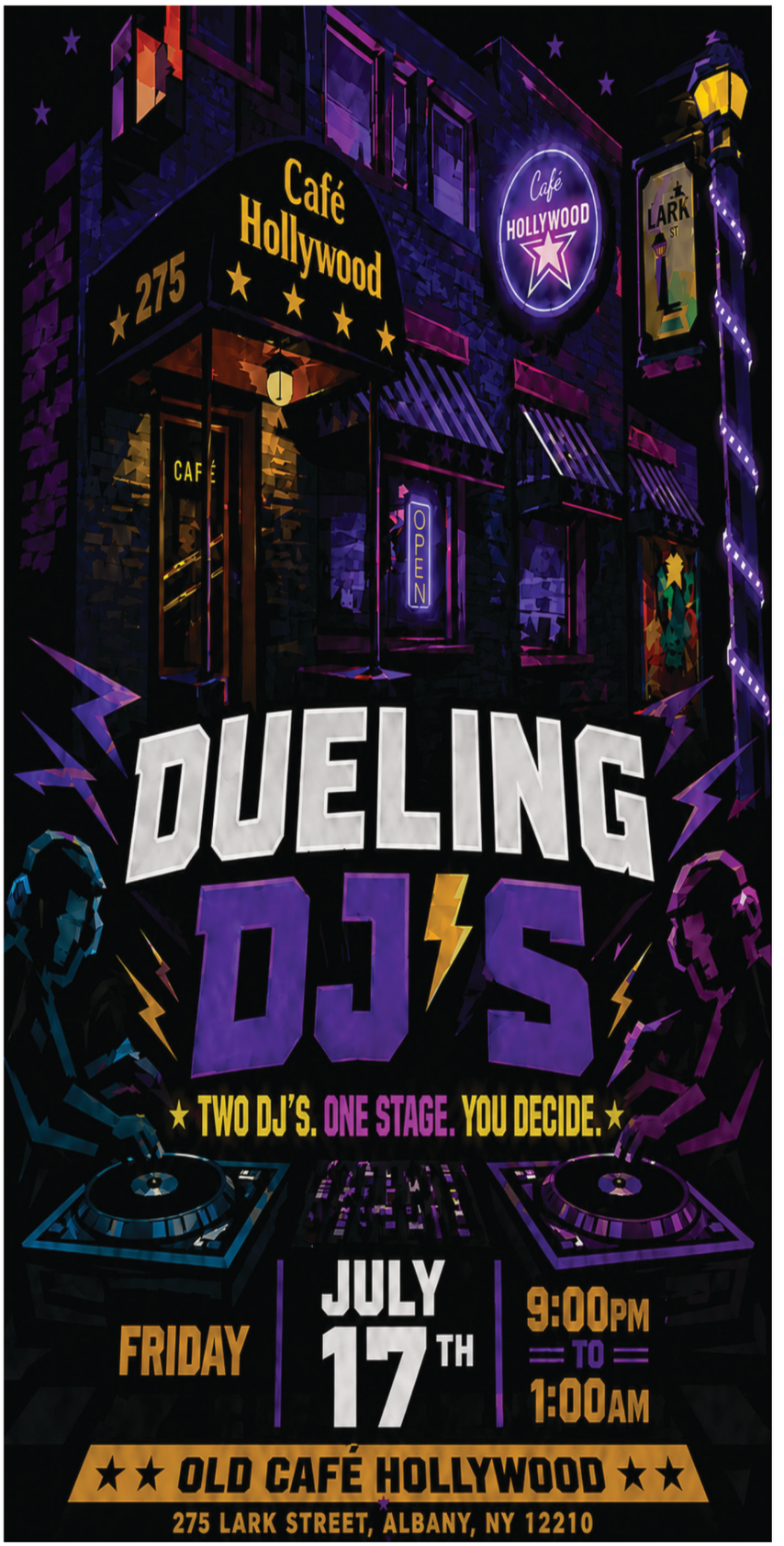
Inspired by David Bowie's 1973 tribute record of the same name, 'Pin Ups" collects a wide-ranging, lovingly curated set of songs by artists who have shaped, challenged, and inspired the band over decades. The album - featuring covers of The Cure, Gang of Four, The Clash, Bob Dylan, The Beatles, The Cramps, The Runaways, Violent Femmes, The Byrds, and more - spans unreleased gems, deep cuts, B-sides, and contributions originally scattered across tribute compilations and international releases. The first single," Kiss Off" (a cover of the Violent Femmes), introduced the project with Zia McCabe on lead vocals, while "Love Song" shifts the spotlight back to Courtney for swingin' baritone energy. They pay tribute to one of their favorite bands, The Damned, in a special way. You see, decadence is nothing new to rock. Lou Reed and The Velvet Underground invented it. Roxy Music flaunted it, and The DANDY WARHOLS keep reinventing it. The album is filled with searing guitar bites and synthesizer wizardry. Vocals are flush, and everything is well-orchestrated. This is perhaps the best indie album thus far in 2026! This top-notch array of cover songs hits on all cylinders!

The LP is truly richly sentimental, recalling some of their favorite songs, or songs by their favorite bands, or just songs they admired, arriving on the heels of a monumental run for The Dandy Warhols, including their critically acclaimed album 'ROCKMAKER' (2024), its reimagined companion 'ROCK REMAKER' (2025), and a powerful return to the stage with The Oregon Symphony, further cementing the band's enduring creative momentum. The Dandy Warhols are Courtney Taylor-Taylor (vocals, guitar), Peter G. Holmström (guitar, keyboards), Zia McCabe (keyboard, bass, percussion), and Brent DeBoer (drums, backing vocals). FIVE STARS!

Also on Warner Records is the new the Black Keys highly anticipated fourteenth studio album 'Peaches!' The album features two power-laden songs issued on digital format prior to the physical product release. These impressive songs: "Where There's Smoke, There's Fire;" and the lead single "You Got To Lose" are k-i-l-l-e-r blues rock! This impressive LP is a visceral and sublimely raw 10-song collection. It is perhaps the band's most natural record since their 2002 debut, 'The Big Come Up.' The songs on the album reflect their obsessive record-collecting habit, which in recent years has escalated into an ongoing series of Record Hang DJ-set dance parties. These hangs fueled a deeper period of musical archaeology.

...TILL NEXT TIME





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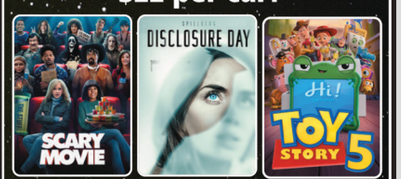

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2... 3... 4... - Mungo Jerry & Bing

By Chris Busone

Well children, summer's here and the time is certainly right. So I thought it'd be the perfect time to shine a little sunlight on some songs traditionally set aside for the sultry summer season. Not just songs with the word "summer" in them, that would be too easy. But songs that just feel like summer to all of us, or maybe it's just me. Sometimes it's just me.

But first, this month's quote, which inspired this inspiring inspiration:

It comes from a man who needs no introduction, but I have a dozen or so paragraphs to fill, so let's give him one anyway. He was the badass Bard of Avon. A playwright, a poet, an actor, and he did it all while wearing the most uncomfortable-looking shirt collar ever tailored. We are, of course, talking about the man from Stratford himself, William Shakespeare. And from Will's quill came his 18th sonnet, most famous for its opening line in which he compares his lady love to a summer's day. But it is a few lines later when Will waxes, "Summer's lease hath all too short a date," that made my Doppler radar perk up.

And as I mulled over Will's Elizabethan weather forecast, it struck me that now that we have completely screwed up the balance of the planet's atmospheric levels, it seems like we're on a nine months of winter, three months of summer program. With practically nothing in between. So, in the shortened lease that summer hath (or is it hathes?... hathened?) and after months and months and still more months of icy, snowy, sleety schmutz, let's pack in all the beachy bliss and warm weather tunes that we can.

Right, groundwork laid, so off we go …

Up near the top of my list is the Lovin' Spoonful's "Summer in the City." Hot town … Sebastian at his best with the back of his neck all dirt and gritty. Just paints an indelible image of a city in heat. What about the pulsing sun-soaked beat of Eddie Cochran, lamenting the "Summertime Blues"? This is blues with a most joyful noise. I mean, he works all summer just to try and earn a dollar. And his mom and papa still won't let him use the car to go ridin' next Sunday? But is Eddie downhearted? Oh no, he just keeps on rockin' those blues.

There are, of course, some ubiquitous summer tunes that break out of their assigned season. Take Bryan Adams' "Summer of 69" or Sinatra's "Summer Wind." These chestnuts are played all year; winter, spring, summer, or fall, the calendar be damned. But let's dig a little deeper, shall we?

How about Martha Davis and the Motels, "Suddenly, Last Summer"? A melody line so liltingly warm that it just makes you want to close your eyes and swing in that hammock. Follow that up with Sly and his family's "Hot Fun in the Summertime" and OOOW LORD, you're off to summertime dreamland.

And lest we forget, summer's answer to White Christmas, Mungo Jerry's "In the Summertime." Just like Der Bingle's classic, it only gets played at that special time of year, and we all just nod along in seasonal agreement. It's a jumpy, bumpy sing-along that never fails to bring a grin and make you feel like "you can stretch right up and touch the sky." Hell, Jerry's muttonchops alone are worth the price of admission on that one. Those things start at his temple and end up in Fort Lauderdale. And while we're at it, I'm just saying, can't someone gin up an AI duet with these two guys? Bing in his ascot scattin' "Bub bub baa bub bub …" and Mungo on a stool, shoeless and stoned, talkin' 'bout "Dee dee dee-dee-dee …" That way, when AI and the machines finally take over, at least we had that.

There are outliers like Eddie and the Cruiser's (Beaver Brown Band) "Wild Summer Nights" that really just grab me. I'm not gonna lie, love me some John Cafferty and Beaver Brown. I don't care if you think he sounds like Bruce; he's from New Jersey, so he comes by it honestly. Of course, Seals & Crofts is making us feel just fine with a warm "Summer Breeze." And does that warm California sun make the girls frisky in old 'Frisco? Just ask the Rivieras, they'll tell ya.

But no worries, when the sun beats down and burns the tar off of the roof, we can always go "Under the Boardwalk" with the Drifters. Out of the sun … people walking above … and we'll be fallin' in love, under the boardwalk … never mind the seaweed and Coney Island whitefish.

There are songs, groups, or records that make no reference to the season but just mean summer to me all the same. We all have them. For no particular reason, it's always been that way with Steely Dan for me. When I hear that first guitar plunk of "Hey Nineteen" and the windows are down in the car, warm air circulating, oh yea, it's summer man. And Elvis Costello's "My Aim is True" record, which at 17 my friends and I played for one entire five-day Memorial Day weekend because we loved it so much, and it was the only cassette tape we had in the van.

When I'm in a punkish mood and the warm weather kicks in, I wanna hop in the car and drive to "Rockaway Beach" with the Ramones and blast the Ataris' cover of Don Henley's "Boys of Summer," which rocks so freakin' hard I just never ever want to hear the original ever again … if I'm being honest, I never did.

On a jazzier tip, I gotta have Lou Donaldson's "Alligator Boogie" record when the mercury climbs, with Lonnie Smith on the B3 and George Benson on guitar. And Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers delivering their jazzy message and "Just Coolin'."

But whether it's punk, rock, jazz, or punk-rock-jazz (is that a thing? That should be a thing.) summer should be filled with music so we can celebrate the sliver of warm air and cool times it brings. Sh**, everything should be filled with music. A friend of mine and I are fond of saying that a great jukebox can make a dive bar cool, and a crappy juke can make the best bar in town a drag. It's always all about the tunes.

So come on, you bronze gods, oil up and smear that white stuff on your nose like Blotto taught us. Now order yourself a chilly martini and a hearts of palm salad, put your feet up on the empty chair next to you, and tune in to some summer sounds that take you to that warm, happy place that you dreamed of all winter.

As for me, it's time I wrap this thing up because this is the Great Northeast and it'll be fall in 15 minutes, which means winter in 20. So quick like, before summer hath ended, count it off with me, 2...3...4...(are we sure it's not hathened?...hathened sounds right to me).

Parker Pollock (WRPI DJ)

By Rob Smittix

The Shuffle

Parker Pollock: This is a little bit strange for me, I have to admit, but cool at the same time, you know?

RRX: Yeah, well ... we are fans of good music. We are also fans of WRPI. But honest to God, it's probably the station on the FM dial that I've listened to the most in my entire life.

PP: Yeah, there are a lot of people who call in who have been listening for years and years.

RRX: Long-time listener, first-time caller. But tell me about your show.

PP: I was a fan of WRPI, but I work here at the school. Before I worked here, I would listen all the time back when the Trojan Horse was on, Barbara Kaiser, Hair Man, of course, and all that stuff. When I got a job here ... within the first week, I had a work order to go down and fix some lights in the record room, and the Hair Man walked in. I thought, now's my chance, I could get to meet him. He talked to me like he knew me forever. So, I started hanging out down there. Since a little kid, I've always been into music, art, and stuff like that. So I started hanging out down there and getting to know the students. I started taking the classes, and it took me a while to pass the test because I'm not that good of a test-taker. But anyway, I passed, and I got Friday nights. That was, I think ... 13 or 14 years. I lose track because of the pandemic. When we were shut down, we were off the air for quite a while.

RRX: Yeah, I remember it hurt.

PP: It hurt bad; we lost a lot of good DJs. We lost a lot of listeners. They ended up letting me, just myself, go back in to do my show because we needed so many broadcast hours a year or whatever to maintain a license. Since I work here, I was part of the COVID protocols. It's something that brings me joy, and I love to do it.

Parker's "The Shuffle" airs Fridays @ 5pm WRPI 91.5 FM

RRX: Yeah, Art Fredette, the boss man here, was like ... you gotta talk to this guy. He's like ... I love this show, he listens all the time, and he said you've got a great selection of music. I'm always listening to WPRI as well, so I'm sure I've heard your show many times. There was actually another legendary DJ from RPI, Jim Barrett, who's with us now at RadioRadioX with his show Kaleidoscope.

PP: That's a great show. I don't know if Artie knows, but he and I know each other.

RRX: I don't know if he knows.

PP: I'm the guy who's always hanging out with Anthony Alberino at all the shows. He and Anthony go back a long way. I mean ... we followed Artie from bar to bar because he always had a great music scene. Also, my buddy Anthony, his father went to school with Jim, and I know Jim from the record store.

RRX: Oh yeah. He's a Troy fixture.

PP: Yeah, it's kind of a small town.

RRX: Yeah, they say it's the smallest city in America with two post offices or something like that.

PP: Yeah, it really is.

RRX: Yeah, Jim told me this story. He said he just showed up at RPI back in the day with a book bag and tried to act like he was a student.

PP: I didn't know that. That's funny.

RRX: It worked out for him. That's kind of the way to do it, I guess. A lot of geniuses up there at RPI.

PP: Well ...

(Both Laugh)

RRX: We got the Brooklyn Bridge, at least.

PP: That is one.

RRX: Oh man, I remember RPI back when they used to have the concerts at the Field House.

PP: Jimi Hendrix played there, in fact, my buddy, Anthony again, some relation of his was a Troy cop, and he was backstage doing security. Jimi Hendrix offered this cop guitar picks and some memorabilia, and the cop said, I don't want any of that hippie s***. So he turned it down.

(Editor's note: Hendrix played at the Troy Amory, not the Field House, on April 19, 1968, after being rescheduled from the original date of April 7 due to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.)

RRX: Oh my God, what a regret that must have been.

PP: It's hilarious. Just a bunch of dope smoking hippies.

RRX: Wow, that was an epic fail right there. Well, that's awesome. So, you're on Friday nights from what time to what time?

PP: I'm scheduled from 5:00 to 6:00, but since I'm here on campus, I sneak in and usually start around 4:30, just because I can.

RRX: And the show is called "The Shuffle"?

PP: That's right.

RRX: Art, myself, and the staff here very much appreciate college radio. I've been on commercial radio since 1996, and I always listened to college radio more than commercial radio. I was often envious because, why can't we do this sort of thing?

PP: Yeah, I mean, how many times do you wanna listen to "Sympathy For The Devil"?

RRX: Right?

PP: That's been on the radio since I was a kid; the classic rock stations play the same stuff over and over.

RRX: Yeah, there's one specific station way up the dial that has long-time notoriety, but I can't even stomach it now. You wanna hear "Living on a Prayer"? Tune in right now, it's playing.



PP: It is.

RRX: People have owned these albums for 50 years, right? So at least play some of the B cuts. Are they afraid people aren't gonna know these songs? They do know them!

PP: They do. You're absolutely right, that's why I try to play songs that you don't hear or songs that I like. I'm not a fan of the Rolling Stones, but the Rolling Stones have a lot of songs besides the ones that the commercial stations constantly play.

RRX: Their catalogue is huge.

PP: It's huge for all those bands. It's corporate-owned, and they've got a playlist that's set, and that's it.

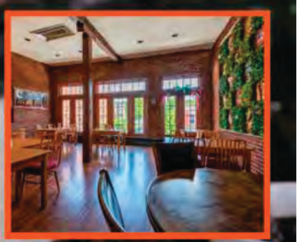
RRX: And that's why we do what we do here at RadioRadioX, and you do what you do at WRPI. Was there anything that you wanted to say to our readers?

PP: Tune in and check it out. It's something that I enjoy, and it brings me joy in a world that doesn't offer a lot of that. So I hope that the music that I play conveys that when you listen. I want people to be happy, you know what I mean?

RRX: I do, and Art was the one telling me how great the music that you play is, and he's a music snob, like me.

PP: That's a huge compliment coming from Artie. I mean ... Artie is responsible for so many bands coming to Troy, like the Fleshtones. Without Artie, I think Troy would be a lot different. So, I really appreciate his support and interest.

Oh Corn! arepas



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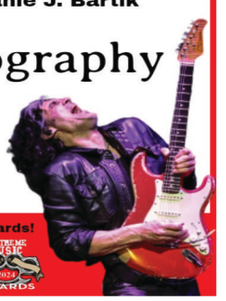

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Rachael Wolff (The Wolff Sisters)

By Rob Smittix

RRX: This is the first interview I've ever done from the New York State Museum.

RW: Oh, you're in a museum? Cool.

RRX: Yeah, I'm here with my grandson and it's a beautiful day out, so.... Yeah, we're very excited to have you come and do the Upstate Unplugged music series that we have going on with the White Lake Studios. I don't know if you've ever been to one of these things but they're pretty awesome.

RW: We have not but we've looked it up and it looks like a good time.

RRX: Yeah, it's like the most personal, intimate kind of setting that you can have but also, it's fun.

RW: Nice.

RRX: So, tell us a little bit about your group The Wolff Sisters.

RW: Wolff is our last name, wolf with two F's and it's myself, I'm Rachael and my two sisters... older sister Rebecca, younger sister Kat. Rebecca on acoustic guitar, I'm on electric and Kat's on keys. We all sing and we're real sisters. We grew up in Hyde Park, Mass and we've been playing together since we were kids. Our Dad is a piano player and our Mom really likes music; we had an upright piano in the living room of our house, where we would jam and write songs. We started playing out in High school and then just kept going from there. Then we added a bass and drummer in 2015. Some shows we play as a trio still, some shows we play as a full band. But yeah, we've toured all over the Northeast and down to Nashville.

RRX: Well it's so cool and it's awesome that you are actually real sisters, I figured as much. You've been making music together ultimately your whole lives.

RW: Officially, officially it's been like 10 years since we started gigging out at actual venues but we've been playing before that at fairs, town events and things like that; but officially I guess, you could say 10-11 years.

RRX: What would you say would be one of the highlights of being in the music business?

RW: First off, it's just fun to be in a band with your siblings. It's a different feeling, it feels like a family affair, it doesn't feel like you're working at a job or anything. But big highlights... we got to play Boston Calling a few years back, which is a huge festival and it's sort of like a hometown show. Other cool highlights... we played at Guster on the Ocean Fest in Maine not too long ago, which is a fun one. I think 2 summers ago or maybe last summer. We just played our first show in Canada in March, so yeah... we keep spreading further and further.

RRX: Cool, you're international now!

RW: (Laughs) Yeah.

RRX: Just like the Albany International Airport, which is a joke. They got one flight to Canada.

RW: One flight nice.

RRX: That's all you need apparently. Well, that's cool. We're very much looking forward to this event and like I said, it's the coolest, you'll be in there and everybody's in there with you. Last time I was there they had candles lit, it's quite the set up. It's June 25th, I believe, off the top of my head. It's the last Thursday of the month. and uh. What are we to expect, do you have anything special in store for us?

RW: So we're doing it as a trio and those shows are special because they're very much about the harmonies. So like... three part sibling harmonies. It's obviously louder and a little bit more shreddy on solos, organ solos and guitar solos but this one is very much about harmonies. So that's really fun.

RRX: I've been checking your stuff out. I'm an instant fan.



RW: Oh, thank you so much.

RRX: Absolutely. Well, I don't wanna take up too much of your time but I wanted to make sure if there was anything that you wanted to say to encourage people to come out? Because there's very limited tickets available for this. We do expect to sell out.

RW: If you wanna see a sort of a genre-bending Americana, rock and roll band with sibling harmonies, come on out to the show!

RRX: Couldn't have said it better. Well, Rachel, I appreciate your time and I will see you aoon.

RW: Thank you so much, Rob.

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3 Questions with Danny Holmes

By Rob Skane



- Danny Holmes

I have had the extremely good fortune to have seen Danny Holmes perform hundreds of times. He's an incredible songwriter, singer, and guitar player. Danny's music is available on all streaming platforms. Do yourself a favor and give his work a listen. His songs have depth, substance, and beautiful musicality. You can find Danny at rosenthornemusic.com.

RRX: What was the moment that made you pick up a guitar and never put it down?

DH: My older brother had a garage band in 1963, and he used to hide his guitar under his bed. I snuck in his room, got his guitar out of its case, and somehow figured out the theme song to that old TV western, "Bonanza"! I was 10! Three years later, I watched "The Monkees" TV show, thinking they were pretty cool, but then CBS had a special on about the Beatles at Shea Stadium, and I realized they were the REAL THING!

I actually played drums first and then bass and sang in all my bands, til I did an acoustic duo with Rich and we were Holmes & Mancini for six years.

Interestingly enough, it was 50 years ago we started, and we just sold out two shows at Unity Hall in Barneveld this June 13th, for a reunion!

RRX: If you could go back and tell your younger self one thing about playing guitar, what would you say?

DH: I would tell my younger self to put down the bass and play some electric instead of just acoustic. Don't call it practicing, just play and learn and EXPRESS yourself!

RRX: When you're not onstage or recording, what kind of stuff do you play when no one's listening?

DH: I try to discover relationships on the neck. Chord positionings, and I open up to let a muse find something I like or feel, and then take it somewhere and begin to hear a song forming.

Sometimes, most times, I write something in my head and then go find it. This way, I don't bring what I already know to begin something.

I am a "good" guitarist but not "great." I am an accompanist for my songs. A writer first. I have good coverage, with good neck knowledge.

I'll end with what I believe to be true.

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Arch Stanton Quartet

Four Musicians, No Leader, and the Jazz Suite Born in a Basement

By Larry Felton

There is no Arch Stanton in the Arch Stanton Quartet. The band is **Terry Gordon** on horns, **Jim Ketterer** on drums, **Chris Macchia** on bass, and **Roger Noyes** on guitar — four musicians who deliberately chose a fictional name because they wanted the group to function as a democracy rather than revolve around a single leader.

Since last fall, the quartet has been performing "Exploring the Sheltering Sky," a program of jazz adaptations and spoken word drawn from the Paul Bowles novel "The Sheltering Sky" and his lesser-known classical compositions. Bowles is remembered as a writer, but he was also a protégé of Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson. He composed chamber music, piano pieces, and orchestral works before leaving New York for Tangier after World War II. His novel follows three Americans drifting through North Africa, and the band's reworkings of his piano pieces provide the musical spine of the hour-long performance.

The Albany County Arts and Culture Program supported the creation of "Exploring the Sheltering Sky" and performances of it at public libraries across the county. I caught the program at the Bach Branch of the Albany Public Library in late April and sat down with all four members at the Lark Tavern before a gig.

RRX: For readers unfamiliar with the reference, where does the name Arch Stanton come from?

Jim Ketterer: From the beginning, the idea was that this should really be a band — not a pickup gig situation — and that it should be a democracy. Nobody's name is out front. But when you're booking jazz gigs, if your name is too creative, places think you're not really a jazz group.

Roger Noyes: So we brought some creativity in through the back door. On the surface, Arch Stanton sounds like a standard jazz name. But it's a reference to "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly."

(For the uninitiated, in the film's climax, the characters race to a cemetery searching for Arch Stanton's grave, believing the gold is buried there. It isn't — it's in an unmarked grave right next to it.)

RN: He's an absent character in the Movie and an absent character in our band.


The Arch Stanton Quartet - photo by Larry Felton Photo

Continued on page 29...









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Continued from page 22...

RRX: Jim, you've lived in Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt. What did Bowles' work unlock for you?

JK: I grew up outside of Saratoga, on a two-mile road with two houses on it. I used to see planes high up on their transatlantic flight. I was always thinking, who's on that flight? Where are they going? What are they doing? I want to do that too.

While in college, I started studying Arabic. And I think it was in college when I first encountered some Paul Bowles. I dug more into it, and then just really got into the book a lot. And as I was figuring out a way to finally go live in North Africa, it was definitely in my imagination.

But what I didn't know at the time was that Paul Bowles had been a composer before he left New York and moved to Tangier right after World War II. I listened to a ton of the music that he composed, and also did a lot of reading about that part of his life. And I think if he can, I can.

RRX: How did you adapt his classical piano music for a jazz group?

Terry Gordon: It was a five-hour rehearsal in Jim's basement. Jim had picked the tunes for us to take apart. I call it "putting it through the Arch prism." We'd pick out the main melodic theme, then go to a slightly different spot in the piece, grab another melodic snippet for a bridge, and turn it into something we could use.

Chris Macchia: What was fun is that Bowles had very sparse left-hand bass parts — maybe two notes — and we'd voice those together in a way that became our stamp on it. The fidelity to the melody is still very true. But the impression of the harmony is what we were able to really adapt.

JK: If you went back and listened to the originals, which are two piano four-hand pieces, you'd recognize the melodies. But the selection and ordering of the tunes is meant to fit the trajectory of the whole performance — from the forward momentum of "Cross Country," to "April Fool Baby," a fractured love song with lyrics by Gertrude Stein, to "Nocturne," which captures the stillness of the desert and the sky.

RRX: Jim assigned each of you a solo to develop on your own. What did that process look like?

JK: I selected texts from the novel and sent one to each of these guys — compose something to go with my recitation. I gave each a musical idea and said, run with it. A lot of the work was done on their own, but then the way the text and their playing interact has evolved. It makes more programmatic sense now.

RRX: You booked the first gig before the material existed?

JK: About two weeks after that session in the basement. That's one of the reasons that session was so intense — we knew we had a first performance coming. We booked the gig before we had the material.

RRX: How has the program been received?

JK: Every time, I worry no one will show up, and every time we're surprised. A woman at one performance told us her father had lived in Morocco. When I read the passage about how if you've been to the Sahara, you will go back — she said it finally made sense why her father, even after a terminal diagnosis, returned. People have opened up to us after these shows in ways none of us expected.

CM: There's an emotional impulse to this music that brings people in, and we try to seize that by not being distant. We do sophisticated things musically, but there's always a desire to connect with the audience.

The final performance of "Exploring the Sheltering Sky" will be on June 19 at the Albany Institute of History and Art. The performance runs from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. and is free. For more information, visit archstantonjazz.com.





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Gorilla Biscuits

An Interview by OP Callaghan

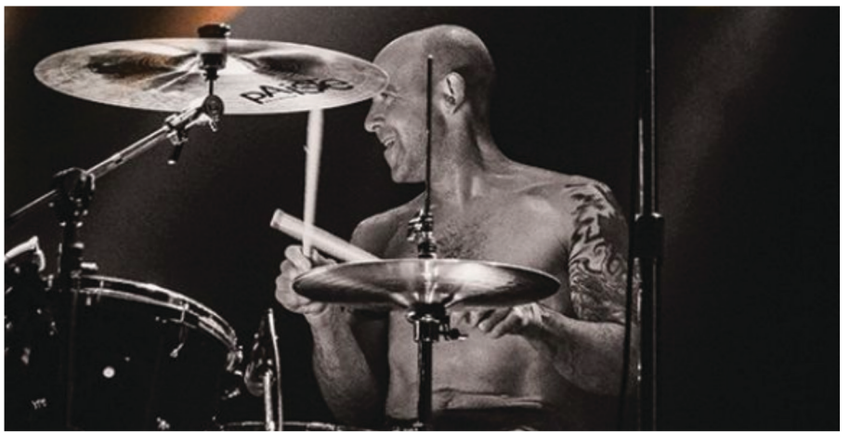
Gorilla Biscuits are an American hardcore band hailing from Queens, N.Y. Formed in 1986, the band is part of the youth crew straight edge wave of New York hardcore. Their first full-length album, "Start Today," is still one of the biggest-selling records ever for Revelation Records and still stands as one of the most influential albums of the genre. Gorilla Biscuits' live shows were always an energized call for unity and strength in the scene, and their recent show at Empire Live was no exception.

Singer Anthony "Civ" Civorelli, guitarists Walter Schreifels and Charlie Garriga, bassist Arthur Meow Smilios, and drummer Luke Abbey are a well-oiled machine. Drawing from albums released over 35 years ago, the band still sounds somehow fresh and relevant. Having not seen them since the early 1990's, I was thrilled to see the band still delivering hard-hitting anthems and sing-alongs with a controlled frenzy reminiscent of old New York Hardcore. Singer Civ ripping through his vocal parts like an angry teenager, tossing the mic to the crowd for choruses, and simply clapping his hands twice to have his microphone miraculously return to the stage, shows the level of controlled chaos that is Gorilla Biscuits. The rest of the band was all business and all smiles behind their instruments, conveying an infectious energy that was palpable from the start of their set to the last song. These guys truly define hardcore, and we are all lucky to have them.

As if this wasn't enough, Civ then wished a happy birthday to one of the architects of the Albany hardcore scene, Mr. Dave Stein, who began Futile Effort Productions and put Albany and its hardcore scene on the map. Dave, who passed away in August of 2023 after a lifelong battle with cancer, was a promoter of all things hardcore, vegan, and straight edge. Dave, along with Steve Reddy of Equal Vision Records, started the Albany hardcore scene, bringing bands in from all over the United States, and making it a "must-play" city to this day.

Holding down the rhythm of Gorilla Biscuits is drummer Luke Abbey. I first met Luke when we were both teenagers, and he had just joined Youth Of Today. Luke has been playing in hardcore bands since the age of 14, including stints with the aforementioned Youth Of Today, Warzone, and Side By Side. Luke is a killer player with an impressive resume. So please welcome Luke Abbey of Gorilla Biscuits!





RRX: Luke! Great to see you! How did you get started being a drummer?

LA: (I was) just into music as a kid. Friends played, and one of their fathers was a drummer. After hitting drums the first time, I was very into it and wanted to play.

RRX: Do you come from a musical family?

LA: I don't. Lotta listeners but pretty much zero players.

RRX: Do you play any other instruments?

LA: I can get around on a bass and keyboard, but primarily for writing/learning purposes. I've filled in on bass before, but I'm by no means a bassist.

RRX: Are you self-taught, or did you take lessons?

LA: About 99% self-taught. Had a music theory class one semester in school and took a few percussion lessons about 30 years ago. Otherwise, everything has been done through my own efforts.

RRX: Tell me about your first kit.

LA: Simple Pearl Export. 4-piece kit with kick, snare, and two racks. My father bought it for me when I was around 11 or 12 and didn't know much about what he was getting. Borrowed a floor tom for the first three or four years playing.

RRX: What are you playing now?

LA: I play drums made by a company called SJC Drums. Have been the past 20 years, actually. Began as a small custom thing started by two brothers, which grew pretty significantly over the past several years. Good drums, solid people, and I've been happy with the sound and quality.

RRX: They sound great! Tell me about some of the work you've done with other artists, bands, etc.

LA: Mostly hardcore and heavier stuff. Gorilla Biscuits has always been the biggest-name band I've done, but there've been tons. Lotta other less aggressive stuff as well, which hasn't always seen much exposure on a large scale.

RRX: Who are some of your influences? Has that changed since you started playing?

LA: It's a fluid bunch of musicians and non-musicians alike. Often depending on current situations and daily life. Some guys like Clyde Stubblefield and Mackie Jayson and John Bonham are always in my head, but there are so many that come and go.

RRX: Tell me about a performance or recording that you are especially proud of.

LA: The Warzone LP "Don't Forget the Struggle, Don't Forget the Streets" was done live when I was 15 and still gets me how tight I sounded at that age.

RRX: It's a great record. I love the stuff you did with Youth of Today, too. What are your future plans? What's the plan after this tour?

LA: Future plans are open. Would like to play more on a consistent and professional level. We (Gorilla Biscuits) have shows booked into June of this year, then will be quiet until 2027.

RRX: What is something that you're passionate about outside of hardcore?

LA: Getting on trails and going!

RRX: Thanks for being here, Luke, and for the incredible playing!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From Blues To Greens

Mark Richardson - An Interview by Sara Busone





RRX: Have you DJ'd before?

MR: I've done interviews. I've been on the radio. But I've never been in DJ work or anything like that.

RRX: What do you think of it so far?

MR: I love it. It's absolutely one of the coolest things I've ever gotten to do. It's so cool. I didn't know what to expect. It kind of was – I was really surprised when Seth (Casale) reached out to me. I was like, you know, I'm honored that you would ask me, but I don't know anything about it. So I talked to Sonny (Speed), whom I've happened to know for a long, long time. I said, Sonny, if I say yes to this, what am I signing up for? He said, you know, it's a commitment. But it's a few hours of my time a week, and it's something that's good to do. It's good to continue to make sure that this genre of music stays relevant, because blues is always in danger of stepping off a cliff into just … irrelevance.

RRX: Really?

MR: I mean, I think it's true. It's viewed as this really, really simplistic art form … a musical form, you know? "1-4-5." Yeah, everybody thinks they can play the blues. But the truth is, it's really a complicated thing. And you have to leave a lot of space. There are nuances, and I think that the general public typically doesn't appreciate some of those nuances. So, what I really appreciate about this opportunity is that there are a lot of new, modern, young blues artists that are really kind of pushing the genre forward in a way that I think is really solid. It reminds me a lot of the whole Stevie Ray Vaughan revolution that happened. He changed the way people thought about blues. So did the Rolling Stones in the late sixties. So periodically it kind of goes through these resurgences, and I think we're in one now, except it's not one single artist, right? It's kind of a community of blues people who take it very seriously and don't want to see it go away.

RRX: Now, you were a player yourself, right?

MR: Yeah

RRX: Please refresh my memory … what did you play? Do you sing?

MR: I'm still playing! Yeah, I play guitar and sing … and right now I'm doing a project called "Not A Band." So I have this theme going … it's "not a" theme. (Laughs)

RRX: Not a theme. Not a band. I like that.

MR: It's not a blues show… (laughs)

RRX: That's so great. I love the name of your show.

MR: It's kind of a play on words. When I first moved to New York, I met some guys, and they were in this band. Really avant-garde, kind of out-there stuff. And the name of their band was "un." And you can use that as a precursor or … I don't remember the right term. Grammatical term? Yeah, but you know they were unpopular; they were whatever it was. And that always kind of stuck with me because I've always fancied myself to be … anti-establishment might be too strong a word … anti-authoritarian for sure. And this idea of a "not" this and "not" that, or the show or the band or whatever, isn't what you might expect. I have to tell this story…

RRX: Sure!

MR: I had just sold my last business. I sold my business in July last year, and I was trying to figure out what I was going to do. The sale happened very quickly, which was great. So, then I'm kind of left like, after a decade of 24/7 running my own business and having employees and investors and all that, I'm now sitting there going, "I don't have to get up today." You know?

RRX: Sure. It's liberating. But an adjustment, I'm sure.

MR: Yeah. So, I said, you know, I really want to start playing again, and I just put together – I wanted a place to jam and get some people together and just have a jam. Not do a show or worry about any of that. So, Tom O'Connor at Jive Hive was kind enough to say, "Well, you can come do that here if you want to rent a rehearsal space." Because I don't have rehearsal space in my house. So I'm calling a bunch of people … and I ended up putting together a really fun and talented group of people. I always like being the least talented person in the band. (Laughs)

RRX: Okay … interesting.

MR: (Laughs) I was calling Mike Kelley from Hammerhead Horns, and many other bands I've known. I called him up; he said, "Yeah, I'll come do that! It's just one night. I'll come like a Tuesday or Wednesday night" … something like that. And then a couple days or maybe a week later, I said, "Here, Mike … here's a song … here's a set." He's like, "Man, it sounds like you're putting a band together. I just don't have time." You know, because he's super busy. Not only was he doing Hammerhead … he was doing sessions in the city and all over the place. He's such a talented, in-demand guy. I totally got it. But I said, "Mike, man, I swear I am not putting a band together. It's not a band! And that stuck. So now that's what I call it. (Laughs)

RRX: It's Not A Band, and this is Not A Show. Hilarious! I love it. Now you have a background in cannabis, as well?

MR: Well, I wouldn't say I have a background in it. But I do have a card, license. I have a dispensary that is open and operating in Whitehall.

RRX: Oh, tell me a little bit about that.

MR: I partnered with Joe Kelley, who has Northern Lights in Menands. So, Joe already had an operating facility – one of the first ones in the capital region to get open … third or something. But that's his hometown. He's got a pizza place up there and a couple other small businesses. He was really looking to open a store in his location. So we created a partnership. I've been doing a little bit of marketing. We just launched a website … a redesigned website. We're working on a digital loyalty program. People can sign up and get rewards. So I'm helping with some of that kind of … I would call back-office stuff more. Communication … strategy-type things.

RRX: That's cool.

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Christine Bilé

Sits down with Sara Busone

RRX: So you came from Pittsfield?

Christine Bilé: All the way from Pittsfield, Mass.

RRX: Now how far away is that?

CB: I think an hour and four minutes.

RRX: So tell me, was guitar something you gravitated to? Singing, songwriting … I'm just curious about your origin story.

CB: That's a great question. I mean, I remember there's a picture of me as a little girl, and I have a little microphone in my hand, and I'm pretty sure Michael Jackson is playing in the background … on TV. My dad is a world musician … like he plays a lot of different instruments and things like that. And I just kind of watched him. And I also have an aunt as well who's a musician. Her name's Elise. No one said "hey, like, pick up the guitar" or anything like that. Just … it was lying around, and one day I was like, listen, I want to learn how to play. So I literally picked it up … googled how do we like write a song and basic chords… (laughs).

RRX: That's awesome. So you're self-taught. Self-taught musicians have a unique way of telling stories and feeling what they're playing. When I watch your videos, I can tell you're just locked in, and you're focused… What inspires you when you write a song? How does the process work for you?

CB: For the most part, in the beginning, it was a lot like what's going on in, like, 3D? Like right around me. And whether it's relationship stuff or I'm feeling sad, I really try to write songs to empower myself because I feel like I'll be honest. I don't feel like I always got those messages as a kid … you know, hey, you can do this … like, you can get through this … stuff like that. So I wrote those for myself, and in the end, I feel like it also touched people who listen to it. Lately it's been more socially conscious because of everything that's going on.

RRX: So are you from this area? Or did you go to school here?

CB: I went to the school of Saint Rose. I grew up in Pittsfield, Mass and I came here because it's not too far away. I still wanted to talk to my parents, or if they needed to bring me something, or if I needed to go see them, they were available. Saint Rose is closed now … rest in peace. But there was a big music scene there. They had a great music program. Not a part of that program – actually, that's a lie; I minored in music business – but I wanted to graduate early. So I said, "Alright, let's lock into the social work and got my master's and bachelor's there.

RRX: That's really cool. How has your experience been in that field? Did you find it's been what you thought it'd be or nothing like what you thought?

CB: Honestly, I think it's been a great degree and great field. I love to help people, like in general. That's just what I do. So sure … whether it's through the music or through talk therapy I do now … I think it was the right decision, and there's - I feel like there's a lot of opportunities from – they talk about micro and macro. There's so many things you can do … so many places you can travel. But people don't always think of all those things when they think about social work. But it's a lot … a lot that you can do.

RRX: So I saw you do televisits?

CB: I do telehealth therapy. I have a small private practice called Sea Blue Wellness and Therapy, and I support high-performing or high-achieving professionals and creatives. So if you're an artist out there and you're like, "hey, I have some issues with performance anxiety," or if you're a doctor, nurse, you know … someone in management, you're like "hey, I'm feeling burnt out, but I need someone to talk to and work through these issues," I'm your person!

RRX: So what else is going on with all things Christine Bilé?

CB: So I have a lot of new accolades. I'm going to talk about them because it's a big deal, and I actually haven't told too many people all the great news.

RRX: Top secret, I respect.

CB: So recently, my song "Lend A Hand" was #7 on the NACC charts, which is the North American College Charts. So that's really exciting. Hey, listen … the music's doing what it needs to do. Also, it's got some international radio play as well in Brussels … Belgium … France. Also in a couple other places, a song I made in my bedroom - because I don't just go to studios to make music … like, I've produced my own records - it's called "Matriarchy Battle Song." It's a five-minute a capella talking about … just a hope for a matriarchal world. And that got played in Switzerland, as well as Australia on the radio. And this is all organic. And then … what else? My song "Chasing The Stars" … that got a Berlin Music Video Awards badge of honor. So it was like one of the top entries out of all of them, which is a lot. This is an International Festival. So that's a pretty big deal.

RRX: That's amazing!

What do you think about the accessibility that creative people have to make an album in their living room … make a movie on their phone?



CB: I feel like it's always been like … you're right, you can just get apps, right? I used GarageBand to make that "Matriarch" song. Yeah, you can do that stuff at home, and I

CB: I feel like it's always been like … you're right, you can just get apps, right? I used GarageBand to make that "Matriarch" song. Yeah, you can do that stuff at home, and I think, like, take advantage of it, because you don't necessarily need a big studio to get your music out there. I mean, my music is overseas from my room. So, I mean, I really encourage people … and I want to empower you to know that you can do it at home. It's OK. And YouTube is your best friend if you want to learn basics of mixing and mastering. Or, I support going to a local community college, too. Or hey, if you have a dream to go somewhere bigger … listen, go learn or go to your local venue and ask them, "Hey, how do you mix and master a full band?" and I'm sure somebody will be willing to teach you.



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Music Notes

The Art and Science of Music

By Peak Music Studios

The Mystery of EQ

Last month, we talked about the voice and why singing is not some mystical gift reserved for "the chosen ones." The voice is an instrument. It can be trained, strengthened, coordinated, and understood. This month, as summer arrives and the motorcycles begin swarming the streets like angry mosquitoes, we turn to another musical mystery: EQ.

EQ stands for equalization, which sounds like something a scientist says while adjusting a laser beam in a secret underground lab. In reality, EQ is much simpler than that. EQ is how we shape sound by frequency. It is how we make a sound feel deep, warm, bright, sharp, smooth, muddy, harsh, aggressive, or clear enough to make sense in a mix.

Every sound contains frequency. A conversation has frequency. A dog bark has frequency. A bass guitar has frequency. A screaming motorcycle flying past your house at midnight definitely has frequency. Here is where things start getting interesting: the note itself is only part of the sound.

When a bass player hits an open E string, the fundamental pitch is around 41 Hz. (Hz or Hertz is simply a measurement of frequency that tells us how many times a sound wave vibrates per second.) 41 Hz is extremely low. You do not just hear it; you feel it. It moves through floors and walls. But if all we heard was that one low frequency, the note would sound huge and blurry. You might feel the room shake without clearly hearing the musical note itself.

That is why harmonics matter. The harmonics above the fundamental give the bass definition, growl, attack, and clarity. A standard 4-string bass mostly lives in the sub-bass, bass, and low-mid ranges, but much of its personality comes from frequencies far above theactual note: finger noise, pick attack, string vibration, amplifier tone.

Guitar works the same way. A standard 24-fret guitar ranges from roughly 82 Hz on the low E string to about 1318 Hz on the highest note of the high E string. Even the highest normal guitar notes still live in the midrange. So why can electric guitar sound bright, sharp, aggressive, or cutting?

Because the real sound of the guitar extends far beyond the fundamental pitch. Distortion, harmonics, pick attack, string scrape, speaker coloration, and amplifier tone all push upward into the upper mids and presence range. That is where the guitar starts to bite. That is where the pick begins to speak. That is where your peaceful, clean tone suddenly decides it wants to fight somebody in a parking lot.

The same principle applies to singing. Many singers are technically singing the correct pitch, but the voice still sounds dull, swallowed, strained, or lifeless. Hitting the note is only part of the job. The singer must also shape vowels, resonance, harmonics, airflow, and tone above the pitch itself. This is why two people can sing the exact same note and sound completely different. One voice rings while another sounds trapped. One feels effortless while another sounds squeezed to death. Same pitch. Completely different harmonic structure. EQ matters to musicians because it teaches us to hear the layers inside sound.

Sub-bass, roughly 20–60 Hz, is the world of rumble and physical weight. The lowest notes of the bass guitar live here. Think thunder in the distance or the kind of movie soundtrack that makes the theater seats vibrate.

Bass frequencies, about 60–250 Hz,provide warmth and foundation. This is where bass guitar fills out the track and where lower guitar notes begin to develop body. A deep speaking voice, a floor tom, or an overenthusiastic car stereo all live in this territory.

Low mids, around 250–500 Hz, add thickness and size. This range can make a guitar sound powerful, but too much creates mud very quickly. Low mids are like salt: a little helps everything. Too much ruins dinner.

The midrange, around 500 Hz–2 kHz, is where much of musical identity lives. This is one of the most important ranges for guitar and vocals because it helps us recognize notes clearly inside a mix. Guitarists often scoop out mids in their bedroom tone because it sounds huge alone. Then they get to rehearsal and disappear the second the drummer starts playing.

Upper mids, roughly 2–5 kHz, control attack, bite, edge, consonants, and intensity. This is where guitars become aggressive and vocals cut through a band. Too little and everything sounds buried. Too much and the music becomes the audio equivalent of stepping barefoot on a Lego.

Motorcycles are a perfect example. The reason they feel painfully loud is not just the low engine rumble. It is the upper-mid and presence frequencies screaming directly into your nervous system while the rider apparently conducts important research on how many neighborhoods can hear one exhaust pipe simultaneously.

Presence frequencies, around 5–8 kHz, add brightness, sparkle, detail, pick scrape, and vocal clarity. Presence helps sound feel alive and immediate, but too much creates harshness and listener fatigue very quickly.

So EQ is much more than "bass, mids, and treble." EQ is really the study of how sound exists in layers. A bass guitar is not simply low frequencies. A guitar is not just mids. A voice is not only pitch.

Every sound contains a fundamental frequency and a whole family of harmonics above it. The fundamental tells us the note, while the harmonics tell us the character. Low frequencies communicate size and weight. Midrange tells us what we are hearing. Upper mids and presence determine clarity, attack, and intelligibility. Understanding this changes the way musicians listen.

If a guitar sounds muddy, the issue may not be the notes being played. It may be excessive low-mid buildup. If a singer sounds dull, the problem may not be pitch accuracy at all. It may be weak resonance or missing harmonic energy. If a bass line disappears in the mix, more volume is often not the answer. The bass may have plenty of low end but not enough definition in the mids.

And if your guitar solo physically injures small woodland animals, there is a good chance you have too much upper-mid or presence energy happening. Passion is good, but treble violence is not.

At Peak Music and Dance, we are not interested in students simply memorizing songs. We want musicians to understand what they are hearing and why sound behaves the way it does. We want bass players to understand why the instrument shakes the room yet still needs articulation. We want guitarists to recognize why pick attack lives far above the actual note being played. We want singers to understand that pitch is only the starting point of vocal sound.

Most importantly, we want students to hear music as something alive, layered, and trainable. The mystery of EQ stops being mysterious once we start listening carefully. A bass note becomes more than a note. A guitar tone becomes more than distortion. A voice becomes more than pitch. A bark, a whisper, a rumble, a scream, or a motorcycle flying down the street at irresponsible speeds all become frequency, color, energy, and texture.

That is EQ. And like the voice, it is not magic. It is something we can learn.

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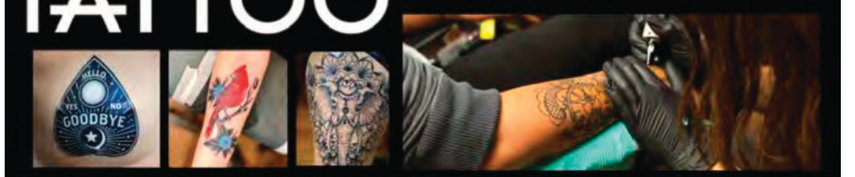

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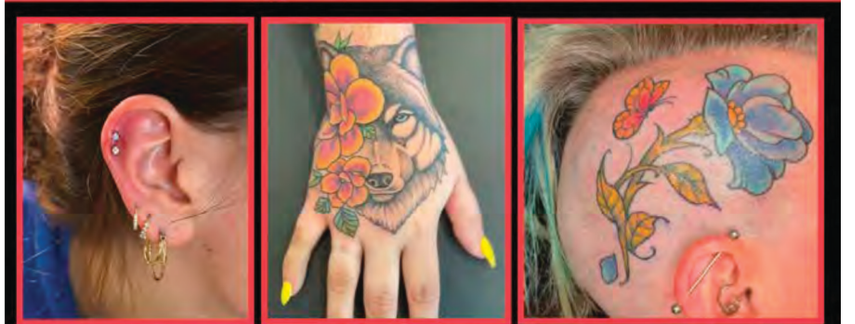

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Mind Blown and GEM Fest:

Serving Two Giant Helpings Of Original Music in Glens Falls

By Jason Irwin

Live original music continues to find momentum in the 12801, fueled by grassroots festivals, community gatherings, and a growing underground scene that's bringing together musicians, artists, and fans of all ages. From the experimental energy of Mind Blown Festival to the established draw of GEM Fest and even the weekly creativity of the Shirt Factory's Thursday Market, the city is more than ever becoming a hub for musicians looking to share new sounds—and for audiences eager to hear them.

Mind Blown Festival: Heavy Music for Mental Health

Mind Blown, an all-ages, free underground rock and art festival, returns to The Shirt Factory for its second year on Saturday, June 27, from 11 am to 9 pm, with two stages, 16 bands, and a mission to raise $20,000 for mental health support in the music community. This year's festival will be one of the first major events to fully activate the former South Street farmers' market pavilion, now relocated to The Shirt Factory with city support to boost tourism and public events. "Mind Blown is really off to the races," said festival co-founder and executive producer Chuck Copenspire. "We've got a full lineup this year — 16 bands across two stages offering a full day of original music that spans multiple styles and generations of artists. — and we're really excited about that." While the music is central, Copenspire said the festival's deeper purpose is about creating space for people to connect and feel comfortable being themselves. "Mental health is really the focus. Part of that is connecting with people and being able to express yourself fully." That idea shapes the entire atmosphere of the event. Unlike many festivals, Mind Blown encourages attendees to embrace creativity not just on stage, but in how they show up. "We want people to come as their true selves," Copenspire said. "Whether you show up as a wizard, a wrestler, a drag queen, or a clown — this is the one day a year where you can stop pretending to be normal and just be around other people having fun being themselves." Headliner Bloodx3 will close out the night with a full production light show, led by Shane and Chris of Super Dark Collective. The bill also highlights heavy hitters Senior Living, along with local underground favorites Industry Standard and Roblox Tycoon, plus a deep roster of regional bands including GUTS, Anomalous, Don Joker, Black Tongue Reverend, Psychomanteum, The Spiral Continuum, Uncle Frank Says No, Vintri Hill, Pleasure Death, 6five6, God's Not Buying a Horse Today, At Light's Wake, and Sons of Eden. The event will also include vendors, food trucks, and interactive elements, including roaming performers and artists throughout the grounds. The festival is free to attend, thanks to sponsorship support. Organizers say that accessibility is key to the festival's mission. "That's part of why the event is free," Copenspire explained. Proceeds from the festival support HeartSupport, a nonprofit organization that provides peer mental-health training within the community. Several mental health resource representatives will be on-site. Future editions of the festival may expand even further, possibly incorporating carnival-style elements or immersive art experiences. "Every year we want it to be a little more audacious," Copenspire said. "Something that shows people what's possible. Next year I want a Ferris wheel." More info: **mindblownfestival.com**

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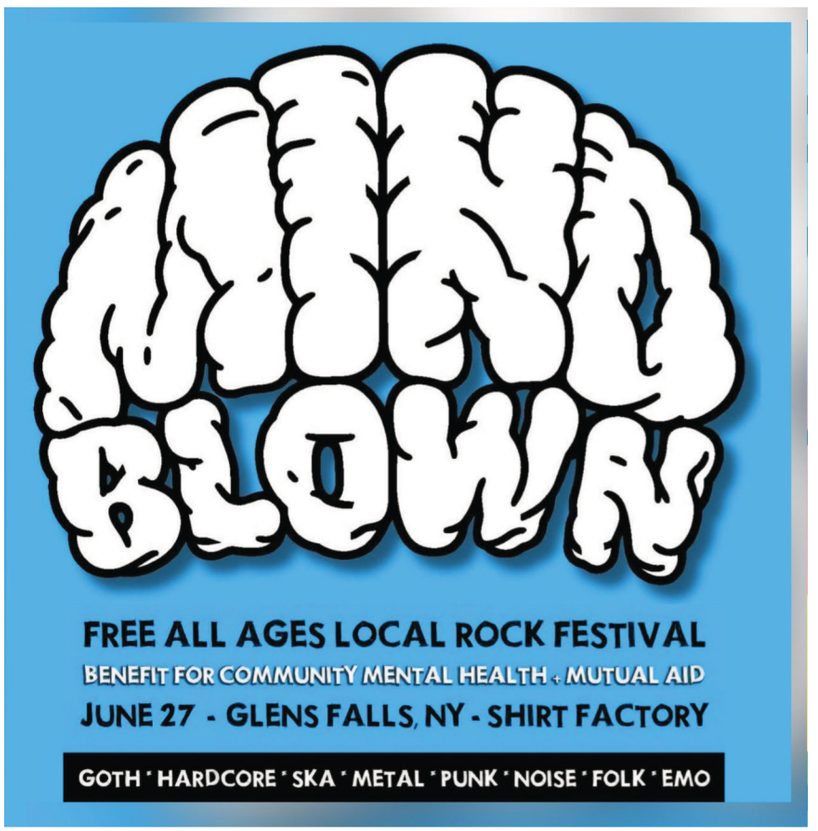
GEM Fest: Where Music and Art Collide

Be sure to add Saturday, August 22, from 5-11 pm to your calendar, as GEM Fest is back! If Mind Blown represents the city's underground edge, GEM Fest stands as its most established and wide-reaching celebration of original music and visual art in downtown Glens Falls. The Glens Falls Entertainment and Music Festival—better known as GEM Fest—has grown from small collaborative experiments into a full-scale, multi-venue takeover of the city. What began as intimate events pairing live bands with visual artists painting in real time has evolved into an experience that turns Glens Falls itself into part of the stage. Co-organized by Brian Michael of Heady Productions, the festival was built on a simple but ambitious idea: remove the barrier between music and visual art and let both unfold together, in real time, in front of an audience. "Where music and the arts collide," Michael says when describing the festival, and that concept still drives everything it does. This year marks a major return to GEM Fest's multi-venue format, expanding the footprint of the festival across three core locations in Glens Falls: Mean Max Brew Works, The Golden Monkey Lounge, and Downtown Social. Each venue brings its own personality to the festival. Mean Max is offering a more raw, energetic performance setting rooted in craft beer culture and close-up live sound. Golden Monkey Lounge will add a more intimate, late-night, club-style atmosphere where jam bands and groove-based acts tend to stretch out. Downtown Social will serve as a central hub for larger performances, social energy, and the after-hours flow of the festival crowd. Rather than isolating performances in one space, GEM Fest encourages movement—audiences are meant to circulate between venues, discovering new bands, stumbling into unexpected collaborations, and experiencing the city as a living festival map. That blending of disciplines gives the festival a distinct atmosphere compared to traditional music events. "It should feel less like a series of separate shows and more like a shared creative environment," says Michael. Wristbands are $10 per venue or $20 for access to all three locations, making it easy for attendees to either focus on a single scene or fully explore everything the festival has to offer. Tickets go on sale June 6, and organizers are encouraging early purchase due to growing attendance each year. At the center of this year's lineup is headliner Sophistafunk, known for their high-energy fusion of funk, hip-hop, and electronic grooves that regularly turn festival sets into full dance-floor experiences. They anchor a lineup that spans genres and generations. Also featured are Joe Mansman and the Midnight Revival Band, Grape Juice, Glass Pony, Capital Zen, The Bright Light Motion, The Hauntings, Immune Friction, Everblue, Arrow Through Me, Death Cult Pharmaceutical, and a number of additional acts still being finalized at the time of planning. "There are even more acts yet to be confirmed," Brian Michael noted, "so people should keep an eye on the website for updates." In addition to live music, GEM Fest continues its signature visual art component, with painters and visual artists working on-site during performances. This side of it is spearheaded by co-founder and award-winning illustrator and painter Anthony Richichi. The concept: Canvases evolve as the music unfolds, giving audiences a chance to watch art being created in real time—often influenced directly by the energy of the bands on stage. Later on, that energy will shift outward into Glens Falls' nightlife scene, where the festival continues beyond the main sets. The official after-party at Downtown Social features The House Syndicate, extending the experience into a more electronic, late-night atmosphere and keeping the city active well past the final stage set. Get all the info at **facebook.com/GemFestAdirondack**

Continued on Page 43...

Continued from Page 42...

And remember: I'm focusing on just these festivals here, obviously. All of this exists alongside the steady flow of live entertainment already happening throughout Glens Falls and beyond. There is a ton of other stuff going on. Check your local listings to see who's playing where and when. As our local scene continues to grow, it's becoming clear that something is taking shape here—something rooted in collaboration, accessibility, and a genuine love of music. Hometown, USA … I think we're doing well.











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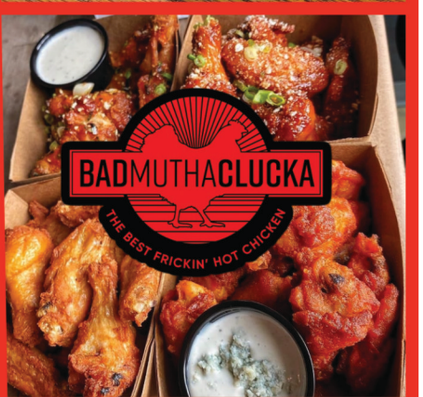

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Duane Beer

Sits down with Sara Busone

RRX: Who do you admire in the local music community and why?

Duane Beer: A couple of groups that first come to mind. I like Zombie Giuliani; their album "No State Solution" (currently cassette only) is one of my all-time favorite punk rock albums. It's loose in all the right ways, and the lyrics carry legit weight to them ...

The Zorbas Trio is pretty darn amazing. The tempo changes are aplenty. The music is intricate and adventurous. I like the carnivalesque atmosphere they are able to create. It's musically and vocally very comforting to the ears (in a spooky sort of way). Kinda angelic - so many details to allow the listener to get lost in. Really ambitious and enjoyable.

RRX: Cover art is cool. If you had to give the public a visual image that you think they would see and just "get" your groove right away, what would it be?

DB: Our latest Blasé DeBris album, "The Expiration of Expectations" (mail order via cacophone.com on June 5th) features a picture I took in our basement. It features - are you ready? A '70s-style black-and-white television showing static, surrounded by roses; a Salada Tea house; a ceramic statue (bust) of a woman wearing a tiger mask; a red mini fridge covered in various stickers and magnets; two microphones; a partial view of a vintage Rocky Horror poster; a partial view of Wrathchild America and the Nogoodnix promo photos; a Warped Tour t-shirt; a classic Creep Cool shirt. And, you may (?) be able to spot a Sike-O-Shriner as well. The album cover looks like we sound.

RRX: What is a memorable place you played? (And bonus points if it's not a well-known place.)

DB: Headhunters in Austin, Texas. I played there twice. Both times with Blasé DeBris. It had a wild Tiki vibe to it. I just thought it was a really cool place. Not QE2 cool, but cool nonetheless. Then one day while scrolling thru TV



stations I saw it on Bar Rescue. The host of Bar Rescue called it "the worst they had ever seen." According to staff, "everything was held together with duct tape and Super Glue. Cockroaches parade and the smell of cat piss hung heavy in the air."

All I can say is, we had a good time there. A really good time! Derby Girls, Drinks and Rock N Roll. Fun Fun Fun.

RRX: Do you have a promotional mindset or philosophy?

DB: A promotional mindset comes at a cost. No, thank you. This "is" the expiration of expectations after all.

A philosophy? Sure. In order to enjoy being in an original band and keep your sanity, write music that personally suits you and your style. Don't think about whom or how many you may eventually appeal to. Play to your bandmates' strengths, and be prepared to compromise. Take pleasure in your performance. Take nothing for granted.

RRX: Tell us something special about what you play: your technique, your instrument.

DB: I'm a guitarist. I have a couple of guitars I "really" enjoy playing. A white Firebird with humbuckers. And, a natural Explorer with a slope cut out for your forearm. I want the guitar to feel as much a part of my body as any other appendage does. I write a lot of stuff on a cheap semi-hollow body that plays quite well. My ace-in-hand is dynamics. I play directly through single-channel amps. I love to play clean and quiet and loud and ruckus without touching the volume knob on the guitar, but by simply picking extremely lightly, to bashing with reckless abandon. Now this requires a really good amp and a really good pickup. The right tools for the right hands, I suppose. That would be my thing.

RRX: One of the unspoken signs of adulthood is having a favorite burner on the stove. We all have one; nobody talks about it. What's yours?

DB: I had never given it much thought. But, looking at our classic cream and black Gibson stovetop oven, I can easily tell I favor the little one in the back left corner. Tucked away neatly and quite comfortable. Happy. Just waiting to get turned on. That would be my go to burner. :)



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Taste Freeze

By Art Fredette

You see and hear it all the time. "There is no good music anymore." "Our music was better than today's." "I may be old, but I saw all the great bands." Etc. HorseSH**!

Boomers and GenX have become insufferable about this, by the way, I am early GenX, so there. You sound like your parents or grandparents, unable to realize that things change, as does music. Our music wasn't better; it was ours, and we are stuck in our comfort zone. A comfort zone reinforced by tight commercial radio formats and Live Nation booking practices. And if you are GenX, let's be honest, most of "our" music was Boomer bands that we had spoon-fed to us. The Beatles, Grateful Dead, Led Zeppelin, and such were really our parents' bands, but their generation just won't let go. They were/are the 800-pound gorilla of what we consume and were allowed to consume. Sure, we had the grunge thing and the MTV bands, but even that got co-opted by older-era acts, i.e., Journey, a '70s band.

According to Psychology Today, by 33, most people stop listening to new music, and by 40, you stop looking for new music altogether. This is called "taste freeze," and it happens not because you are old but because older music tends to hold more memories, and as we age, we choose to search out what is comfortable as opposed to what is new or different. Many older listeners will migrate to other genres of music like jazz or country because of the relatability factor, rather than search for completely new music. This is not an excuse, but it can be taken as a warning.

I often equate music to pizza. All pizzas have dough, sauce, cheese, etc., but the really exciting part of a pizza is the toppings. You can choose your variation on the theme as often as you want and experience new flavors. So I ask, why would you musically confine yourself to what equates to a lifetime of pepperoni pizza? Because you have been programmed to? Because you are lazy and want familiarity? Or because you let yourself get old? Yep, I said it.

When I was younger, a very wise man, Jim Barrett, told me to never stop searching for new music. Even if it is an older band that you never delved into, keep listening. Great advice from my mentor. I will take things one step further: search out new sounds! Get out of your comfort zone. Explore.

The days of 1-4-5 blues-based rock are over. It is what it is, a natural progression that just happens. The younger artist isn't bound by the conventions we have upheld, and good for them. Newer artists are grabbing pieces from different genres and styles and coming out with the music for their generation. Is all of it good? Hell no, but neither was all of "our" music. Do I have to mention Phil Collins and "Sussudio"?

So, basically what I am trying to say is get out there and listen and cut the kids a break. Your grandparents hated Elvis and Little Richard, your parents hated Nirvana, and you are acting just like them. Stop with the musical equivalent of "Get off my lawn" and being nostalgic for an era that never really happened, and explore. Use your time for discovery, and maybe, just maybe, you will be surprised. Get past "taste freeze" and enjoy the flavor again. What do you have to lose? Nothing. And you have everything to gain …






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Thanks For Asking

Killing Connor

Brooklyn's Killing Connor is an unapologetic metalcore band visibly on the rise. They delivered a blistering set this past March at Empire Live, kicking the night off for Overkill. Killing Connor comprises Matt Rosenthal (guitar), Connor Shann (bass), Brian Thompson (vocals), and Dan Schleicher (drums).

RRX: Tell me about your most recent song, album, or video. What went into making it? Not necessarily the process, but a cool story that took place within the process.

Matt Rosenthal: When I first pitched starting a metalcore band to my friend Connor, we were coming out of the wreckage of another project that fell apart over logistics. It felt like our last real shot at making something like this work, so I knew the pitch had to be strong.

I went home and wrote an entire album in three weeks.

I called it "How It Could Be" — a reflection of what we were chasing at the time: a life on stage, doing this for real. Although the album is no longer being released as "How It Could Be," six of those twelve songs became our first live set! Three are already out, and the other three are coming very soon.

RRX: What can you say about your influences, and what you feel you've done with their influence as a musician or band? Have you extended their work?

MR: Our main influences are August Burns Red, Bleed From Within, and Killswitch Engage. We try to preserve the core of what makes those bands hit — drop C and drop B tunings, fast-paced riffs, and those groovy, head-nodding sections — but still make it our own. We're not trying to reinvent metalcore — we're trying to carry that sound forward and put our own stamp on it.

RRX: What do you think is the most poorly understood thing about music, or the music you play?

MR: I think metalcore gets a bad rep because it lives in this weird middle ground. It's not quite "hard enough" for the hardcore crowd, and not quite "intimidating enough" for the metal purists. Because of that, it gets written off from both sides like it doesn't fully belong anywhere.

But that's kind of the point.

Metalcore has always been about contrast. It's aggressive, but it's also melodic. It can be technical and tight one second, then open up into something atmospheric or emotional the next. That push and pull is what makes it interesting — but it's also what makes people misunderstand it.

A lot of people hear the surface-level stuff — breakdowns, screaming, big choruses—and assume that's all it is. But what actually makes it work is the balance. The tension between chaos and control, heaviness and melody, precision and emotion.

For us, that's where the identity of the genre really lives. It's not trying to out-heavy everything else or out-technical everyone else. It's about making something that feels intense, even when it pulls back. Something that sticks with you, not just something that hits you.

So yeah, people either find it nostalgic or they don't get it at all — but the ones who get it really get it.

RRX: Part of learning to be a musician is falling in love with a song or album, and hammering away at your instrument until you can play the whole thing What was that song for you? Was there a hardest part?

Connor Shann: Tool's "Lateralus" is the first album I remember learning from start to finish. At some point in middle school, I discovered Tool, and within the first two years of high school, I had memorized "Lateralus." The hardest, but also most exciting, part of learning an album like this is fully internalizing the odd time signature grooves. Not only do Tool write riffs plainly in odd time, but occasionally they take it a step further with cross-rhythms using the odd time signatures (see "Schism" from 3:12-3:28 where the guitar plays a shorter 7/8 riff and the bass and drums play a longer idea in 14/8) or by fully playing in two different time signatures (see "Lateralus" 4:47-6:20 where the bass and guitar play in 6/8 and the drums begin in 5/8 before playing both the 5 and 6 simultaneously), which is referred to as "polymeter." Tool are masters of letting different time signatures breathe in their own unique ways. While at first it required some boring analysis and strict practice counting the patterns, the work was well worth it to be able to forget all of the logical stuff and just feel the rhythms!

RRX: What's a stereotype about the genre of music that you play?

Dan Schleicher: From the outside looking in, all the different forms of metal get a bad rap. I often tell people in my circle who don't know that it's not what it seems. I have played all different types of music, and in all different types of bands, and I will tell you that metal music as a whole has the most humble, kind, loyal, and supportive people you will ever meet! You don't find this in other music genres. At any metal show, you will find that it's actually a massive support group.

It's filled with heavily passionate people who have extreme willpower. Many metal listeners generally have had hardships, and they have prevailed over them through their perseverance. This music grabs our souls and empowers us to release all the harmful energy that we accumulate due to these hardships. It's really quite a beautiful thing!

RRX: Would you rather have one of your songs blow up and make you a one-hit wonder and household name, or would you rather have all your songs be solidly received, but no chart-climbers?

Brian Thompson: That's a really good question. To be honest, I would love for our band to be noted for some memorable songs. Having people singing our lyrics back to us. That's the main goal. However, if I had to choose, I would have to pick a one-hit wonder. As a musician, I'm a fan first. I just can't limit myself to just one genre. Having that one song will get your foot in the door as far as opportunities are concerned. You will be recognized by other peers who are also in the business, which can maybe help in other ways behind the scenes. There's more than one way to make it in the music business than just being a frontman. The possibilities are endless.




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Canna Talk

By MBF & 400 River

At this point in the state's legalization of cannabis, most consumers have a dispensary (or three) within miles of their home. Our access to the plant has been simplified, but HOW does cannabis actually work in our bodies? It's a complicated process and, honestly, one that is still being studied and finally being taken seriously by the research community. Well, we definitely don't have all the answers, but let's shed a little light on why we get high.

Basically, from the start of history, people have been using cannabis as a cornerstone of their civilization. First and foremost, the cannabis plant was used widely among different cultures as a durable fiber. Hemp, the soft fiber part of the cannabis stems, was found in remnants of clothes, paper, and rope in Asia dating way back, like to 5000 BC and before. We are just starting to get back to using industrial hemp for plastics, hempcrete, and other uses after eschewing the plant for years. Importantly, the cannabis plant was also used for ceremonial purposes and as a pain relief agent. Anyone down for a cannabis steam bath? That is how the ancient Scythians partook. Mystical Sufi traditions used cannabis to assist in their meditation and contemplation, a great tool for spiritual exploration. It is really wild to think about how widespread the use of cannabis was. Anywhere the plant grew naturally, from Africa to India, from central Russia to Asia and beyond, people were reaping the full extent of benefits from the cannabis plant.

Looks like cannabis users in antiquity were on to something. The substances found in cannabis actually work in synergy with our body. While it's not something we learned about back in high school biology, our body does indeed have a system of cannabinoid receptors. The human body's endocannabinoid system (ECS) is a complex pathway of neurons, neural pathways and cells that may be crucial in regulating some of our most basic bodily functions. We are talking about how our body deals with pain, our motor functions, and even reproduction.

We don't just have a cannabinoid system; we have an ENDOcannabinoid system. This system doesn't just help us out when we light up a joint - it can be surprising to find out that our bodies make our own cannabinoids. Endogenous cannabinoids are lipid molecules that the body produces naturally and interact with our body's ECS. The first endogenous cannabinoid ever discovered is called Anandamide, which derives its name from the Sanskrit word "ananda," meaning joy or bliss. This bliss molecule was only found in 1992 and works in the body very similarly to substances found in cannabis flower. In short, our bodies have a system to use cannabinoids, and we actually make those cannabinoids "in-house" - no need for a dispensary.

Crazily enough, when we consume EXOgenous cannabinoids, coming, for example, from a joint, those external cannabinoids also interact with our ECS. Maybe it will eventually be discovered that exogenous cannabinoids react slightly differently than endogenous cannabinoids, but at this moment, research shows they act incredibly similarly to those we make ourselves. They bind to the body's cannabinoid receptors just like endogenous cannabinoids. Synthetic cannabinoids definitely act upon our ECS, but there's no credible scientific research that proves they are safe. When ingesting cannabis, you can definitely start to feel the effects of cannabinoids on the body, whether it's feelings of deep relaxation, pain relief, a little loss of concentration or even some anxiety. The quantity ingested has a deep impact on how our body and mind feel.

There is a ton of impartial research coming out now, but for far too long cannabis research has been clouded by the fact that it's a harmful "drug," not a longstanding part of the human experience. What scientists DO generally agree on now is that the endocannabinoid system has three main components: endocannabinoids, cannabinoid receptors, and various enzymes. Endogenous cannabinoids occur naturally in the body and are lipid-based neurotransmitters. These chemical messengers send signals between cells and are produced by the body on an "as-needed" basis. Cannabinoid receptors are found on the outside of cells and basically capture and use cannabinoids. While research is still ongoing, scientists have definitively found two types of receptors: CB1 and CB2. CB1 receptors are mainly found in the central nervous system. They may also impact how cannabis affects our behavior. CB2 receptors are found in the peripheral nervous system and in our immune system. CB2 receptors are found in our tonsils, if we still have them, and our muscles, liver, and fat tissue. Researchers aren't sure of why, but cannabinoids seem to bind more effectively to CB1 receptors.

There's a lot to take in about the endocannabinoid system, and scientists are still finding out new information as we start to take this bodily system seriously. Let's wind down with a well-known "fact" about cannabis and how it works with the human body. It is pretty frequently brought up that one cannot overdose on cannabis. In short, this is true. There are no known deaths reported specifically from a cannabis overdose. If you've ever overindulged in cannabis, you may know that consuming too much may lead to some unpleasant sensations. Cannabis Hyperemesis Syndrome has been in the news a lot now. This syndrome generally impacts long-term, heavy smokers and presents itself in the form of nausea, vomiting, and pain. The only way to stop the effects is to stop smoking cannabis. So, while cannabis is generally recognized as a safe substance to consume, it is always recommended to consume responsibly, know your source, and start slowly.

Thanks for sticking around to the end. This is a complicated topic, and it's a topic that is still being researched, so I hope to have compiled as much accurate yet easily digestible information as possible in a short space!



Thanks For Asking

Cherry Drop

We spoke with vocalist Lucas Sunn to learn a little bit more about them.

RRX: We all get a little support from those around us. Who do you admire in your community?

LS: Being from Detroit, I think we could pick from a huge number of people. Right now, there's a collection of bands in the D known as "The Detroit Freak Parade." Any band/member from that group is very inspirational and admirable. To name a few specifically: Sonic Smut, The Cult of Spaceskull, Pepper and the Heavy Boys, Glass Chimera. Also, we wanna say Vision Immortal, a YouTube channel that captures live footage of bands. They're capturing what's going on in Detroit right now, and we look up to all those cats.

RRX: What was the very first reaction to your music, from the first person to ever hear so much as a practice jam or the demo of your first song?

LS: When we first started jamming, we had gotten some (terrible) demos together and sent them to a friend and Detroit staple Rob Ceder. We were more of a psych band at the time, and Rob liked the heavy stuff. Rob, being the super nice and supportive guy he is, said something like, "Right on, it's not for me, but keep pushing it, fellas. Don't stop!" That meant a lot. Just some supportive words from someone who was already so involved with the scene. Four years later, the sound has changed a bit; we listened to Rob and we still haven't stopped.

RRX: Any interesting/funny stories from performing you'd care to share?

LS: HERE'S A GOODIE! Not while performing, but the day we played our first festival. Cherry Drop lives together; we practice in our basement. I got home from work early, and we had to play the Hamtramck Blowout Festival that night. So I walk in around noon, go downstairs to start loading up equipment. The first thing I see is water pouring from the ceiling, directly into Cory's pedal board, Fender Deville, all of our guitars, and drums. One of us had left the bathroom sink running when we left for work. It overflowed onto the bathroom floor and into the basement. Everything was soaked, and we had to load in in like six hours. Other guys got home, we took everything apart, bought like 10 pounds of rice, and started trying to dry stuff out. Blowing fans on everything and praying to Lemmy that this would work out. Well, we must've done something right because EVERYTHING STILL WORKED THAT NIGHT. We got to the festival on time, used our own gear, and played a great show. I don't think we'll ever get that lucky again.

RRX: What is a memorable place you played?

LS: Last year, and also once on this tour, we played at this venue in Mansfield, Ohio, called The Mothership. That's definitely a special place. Mansfield doesn't have a lot in it, so The Mothership is where a lot of cats go for a good time. Run by local musicians and people who just genuinely care about art, it's THE SPOT to play if you go through Ohio. Liquid light legend Roger Davies resides there. Jeff, Nate, and Shannon are some of the coolest cats to own a venue we've ever met. They've fed us, sheltered us for the night, and welcomed us with open arms the same way they do with EVERY traveling artist that comes through there. We suggest it to everyone, HIT THE MOTHERSHIP.

RRX: What's tripped you up, musically, that you had to overcome?

LS: Musically, we've all tripped over our own things. I think together, though, we've all had a lot of fun in learning how to manage ourselves and the project itself. Like, we all knew how to play already and write songs. But we had to learn what to do with it after we got it together. How to make a record, plan a tour, support our scene, promote ourselves, all the things you don't think about when you start a band. All of us have enjoyed learning together and are excited for all the lessons we still have to learn, even the hard ones.





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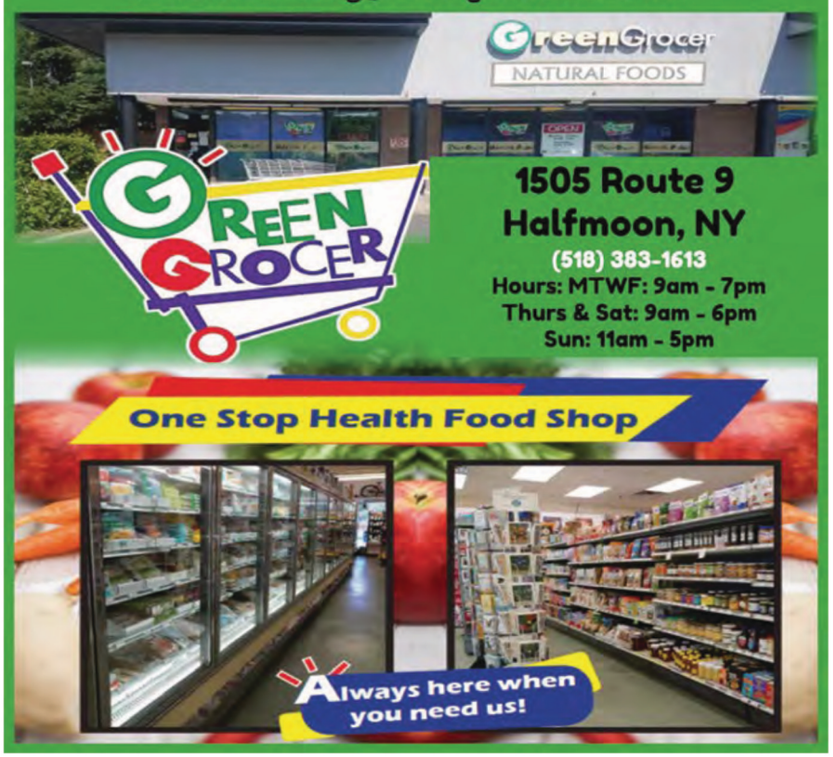

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Keegan James

Q: We let it out differently when we play music. The happy, sad, good and back; it can all be put out musically. Overall, do you feel better when you sing about the better times, or the worser times? Is there a difference you can describe?

A: I find that music has become the place where my frustrations get laid to rest. I think that's a common thing is music, especially music made by United States citizens. My generation has been taught that it is our best effort to communicate kindly with others. This requires a lot of "filtering". We all have heavy feelings and frustrations, but not all of them need to be said. Music is a place where I can put these feelings. It creates an opportunity for me to process them deeply and to eventually take them less seriously.

Q: What instrument would you add to the band if you could? Is there anything you are trying to do musically that would be helped with one or more additional players

A: Currently I am looking to form a Keegan James "band"! Recently I've had the pleasure of performing at Albany's Tulip fest, The Jive Hive and Indie Whims with the very talented Hunter Frost on guitar and bass and also Peter Rodrick on drums! I'd love to consistently perform with a drummer, bassist / guitarist who's passionate about funky pop grooves, who believes in me and has a keen sense of audio tech!

Q: Is there a song you wrote that really died on the vine? Something you all like but somehow just couldn't make it work. You swear never to play it live, that sort of thing?

A: HAH I did write a song a few years ago that has been sitting in my archives. It remains untitled, but it very much has a club vibe to it. I wanted to test out writing music that would vibe at a place like Waterworks Pub. I sometimes listen to it on my own, but came to accept that it just isn't a song that is meant to be released on my catalog. Maybe one day I'll sell it as an exclusive on my website or pass it along to other artists, but for now it rests untouched!

Q: Is there a favorite time of year? What time of year do you/ does the band have the most shows? Is there a recurring thing in the year that's particularly memorable?

A: I tend to have the most shows around this time of year May-June! It's an exciting time! Pride month is here and everyone is hosting their summer events! I really love getting to be outside and seeing the community come together for things like Tulip Fest, NOYK presents loud and proud live, and

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Indie Whims! I also tend to do a lot during the holiday season! My background in musical theater jazz makes holiday music a specialty of mine!

Q: Playing out is tricky because you never know what's going to happen when you get there. Sometimes everything goes wrong.

What was your worst show like?

A: I feel as though I have become an expert at pivoting in this line of work! I tend to run into a lot of sound problems, whether it's due to track malfunctions, microphone mishaps, I've learned the hard way how important a good sound check is. My bumpiest show was a 90's themed show at lost and found a couple years ago. It was my turn to perform and for some reason the tracks I was using lost the entire low end of the sound. It was painfully awkward, and I did my best to turn it into a comedy show. That's when a miracle happened. Shannon Tehya and her band of 5 jumped up to the stage, took a look at my set list and without a thought sight read all of my songs to back me up and keep the show going. It was one of the most magical moments I've experienced performing in the Capital Region!

Q: Sex, drugs, and rock and roll. Or so they say. Whether you're off the wagon, on it, or never been, there's something you got a thirst for. What are some of your harmless vices?

A: Caffeine and Concerta. I have had ADHD my whole life and on top of my (legally prescribed) stimulants, you will often see me with a cold brew in my hand at 11pm to keep me going for these late night shows. Heck I'm literally holding a latte right now while writing these answers out.

Q: With services like Spotify, streaming revenue can be pretty dismal. Without spilling secrets, do you have a promotional mindset or philosophy?

A: I'm painfully aware that when it comes to being a music artist, you must also be a walking brand / business if you want to survive. While I have side gigs like teaching yoga and music to students with special needs and dog sitting. I'm an artist full time and often struggle to make ends meet. I continue to explore many different avenues to generate as much revenue as possible. I'll let you in on a little secret, the money doesn't come from the streams and interviews. The money comes from things like merch sales, brand deals and monetizing your skills through songwriting / producing . My friends and I often spend time together hand making our clothing merchandise, we design stickers and posters WITHOUT AI, We invest in materials that we know will bring us a return and do our best to provide what we believe will make our audience happiest! When you're at a local show, the best way to show your support and keep an artist going is by taking a good look at their merch table and buying their music directly!

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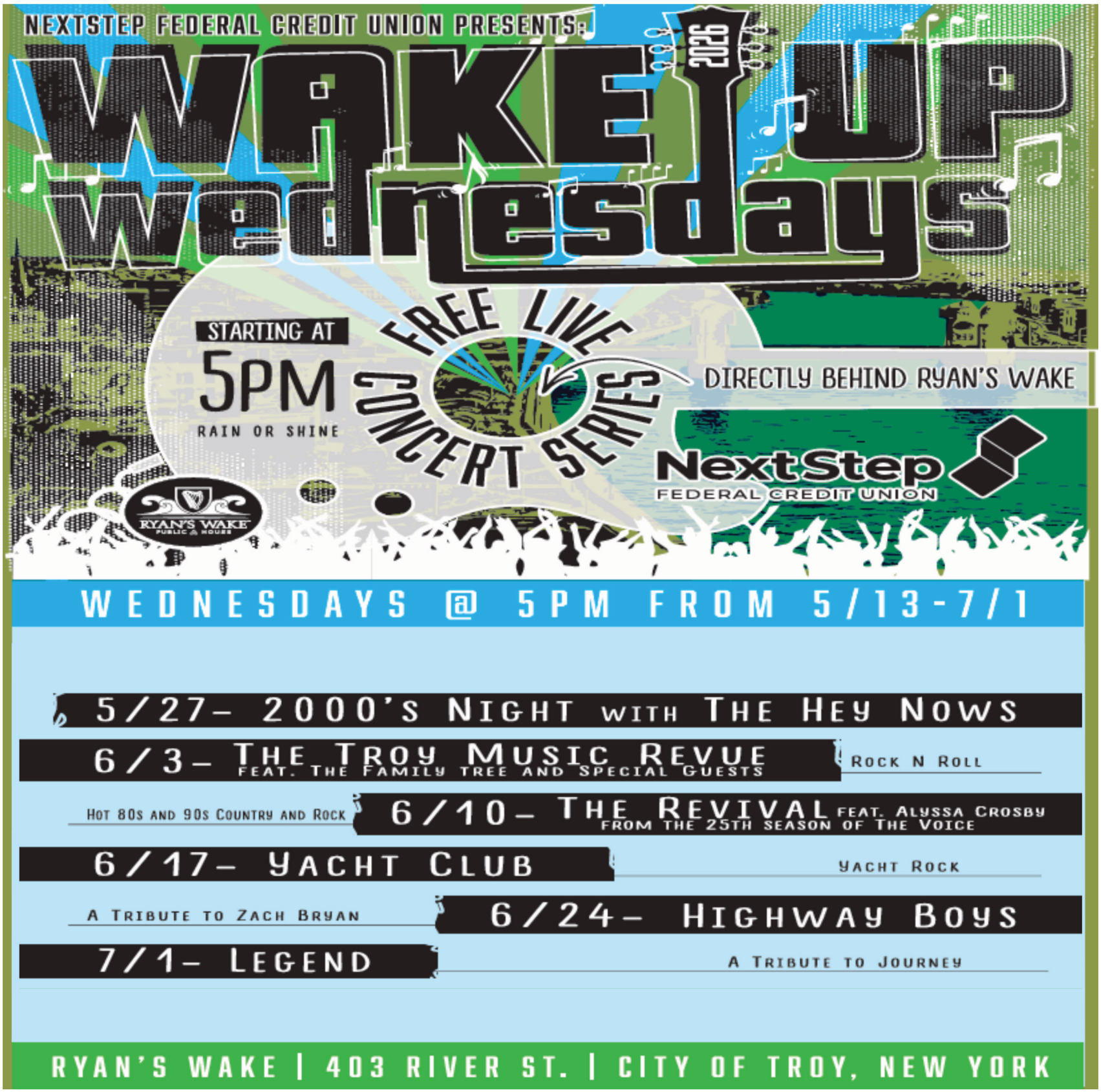
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The Prog Digest

By Klyde Kadiddlehumper

"Hey, let's go see Dolby again."

You all know that Klyde goes to shows. Usually with Constant Companion (CC) in tow. Recently, an old mate dropped a note and said, "Hey, let's go see Dolby again."

The numbers are interesting, as (similar to Peter Capaldi) the subject here is exactly five months older than Klyde – born Oct 14, 1958, in London as Thomas Morgan Robertson. To us, he's Thomas Dolby, named for the noise-reducing process developed by Dr. Ray Dolby. (Perhaps one day Klyde will tell the story of the time The Fatman - long may he wave, probably having dinner with an Elvis Impersonator - and I were at a talk by Dr Dolby, and I asked pithy questions.)

The show was in Kingston, likely a part of the tour to allow his bass player, Gail Ann Dorsey, to hang with friends and family as it's her current place of residence. A wonderful performer herself, she opened the show and has a really lovely voice and is a talented songwriter. Oh, and did I mention she played in Bowie's band?

With a full band (which is uncommon for Dolby), the show was sold out, the audience excited, and the seats, ummmmm, uncomfortable.

Now, my companion for the evening (in honor of Mel Brooks, we will call him The Schwartz) and I were excited. What we did not know is just how much we would learn, some of which is pretty well known, other bits, not so much.

Thomas Dolby played in Bowie's band for Live Aid in July 1985. I remember it well. Interesting story – Dolby snuck a small camera with him and caught a photo of Bowie, reflected in the glass, in the chopper as they flew to Wembley Stadium. Bowie had a serious fear of flying and did not want pictures.

On a trip to LA, the weather stunk, Dolby had mono, and there was a break. He called the only person in his Filofax in the area and took a car to the guy's house. He got out of the car, the gates opened, he walked to the door, rang the bell, and that friend opened said door. Thomas Dolby warmed himself a bit by hanging out with Michael Jackson.

On the reissue of his album "The Golden Age of Wireless" is a song that was the B-side to "She Blinded Me with Science" called "One of Our Submarines." As family lore would have it, his uncle (Stephen Spring-Rice, second-in-command of the WW2 submarine P48) was lost at sea during a "training exercise" off the coast of England.

Dolby told the story about meeting a guy and finding out, after many WW2 documents were declassified, that the P48 had actually been lost off the coast of Tunisia. Anyone with a map will note that Tunisia is in Northern Africa. Decidedly not the southern coast of England.

While cool enough, what The Schwartz and I were not clued in on was that Thomas Dolby is a professor at the Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins. Chaired even.

During his performance, Dolby played bits of a new piece and while I'd love to provide more detail, it's not ready for prime time and, well, he asked we not make a fuss. As a writer, it's tough not to, but then again, the man was nice enough to ask.

In the end, we did not eat at Colonel Sandurz, no Yogurt was offered, we did not Barf, and neither of us is married to a Druid American Princess.

However, The Schwartz was with me.

Until next time. – Klyde

Continued from page 34...

MR: They're both Northern Lights. This is Northern Lights NY Menands, and that's Northern Lights NY Whitehall. The idea is to potentially build a brand out of that. And we're interested in other opportunities. Simultaneously, I was running a very successful solar development company.

RRX: Which is fascinating.

MR: It was a successful company, but it took all of my time. So … the idea of trying to go out on a limb and go to some place that I had really no idea how it was going to go … just wasn't practical. And then, after the license was granted to me, we took on some investors in the other business, and of course, part of that process was background checks and disclosures. I said, "Hey, I got a cannabis license," and they were like, "That's great, you can't use it ." So that put the final nail in the coffin for starting the dispensary.

RRX: Yeah, I bet.

MR: Fast forward a year and a half, or two more years, and the clock's ticking on my CURAD license because there was only so much time you could keep the application open. And we sold the solar business, and I happened to meet Joe through a mutual acquaintance. We hit it off immediately. Joe's such a good, solid guy. Just one of the nice guys. Super hard worker. He's a really good dude, and he's got a great place in Menands. I was really impressed with that. And so, we decided to give it a shot.

RRX: You have a lot of things going on. You have a lot of vision.

MR: I like to keep my eyes open. I think I'm also cursed with this aversion to boredom. (Laughs)

RRX: Aversion to boredom! I like that.

MR: Unfortunately, it's really hard to make any money in the music business. But it's not about the money for me. It's really about the enjoyment. Being able to … It's a way to communicate. I don't think any non-musicians really understand that, but musicians totally get it. It's nonverbal communication with other people, and there's really nothing quite like it. So far, on the radio show, I haven't scripted anything.

RRX: I was going to ask you about that.

MR: I've been trying to keep it super limited for me and my voice and just let the music do the talking. So it's just me introducing songs and telling people who it was, and maybe a tiny little factoid. I certainly don't want it to turn into a pedantic … you know, a history lesson or anything like that. I just can't stand that. There's enough of those out there. And there are a few really great documentaries. If you want to go check it out, they're out there. I don't need to do that part, but I do think that highlighting some of the connections - and I learn new stuff all the time. I mean, that happens all the time if you are really into music, right? You just see those connections. The roots and branches in all the different places. Who influenced who, who ripped off some lick or phrase or whatever, and it's prevalent. It's everywhere, but it's really prevalent in the blues because you've got a relatively limited vocabulary. And this goes back to my previous comment about people kind of misunderstanding that limited vocabulary for simple and not very interesting. Right?

RRX: Yeah…

MR: Those things are not true, and they're not mutually exclusive. To have a limited vocabulary - that's what makes it so great. Frankly, it's people's ability to express that relatively limited vocabulary in a way that either nobody's heard before or it's got new energy in some way, but you're always calling back to the licks and phrases, and the structure and arrangement of songs. It's a really cool thing … to help people kind of connect those dots.

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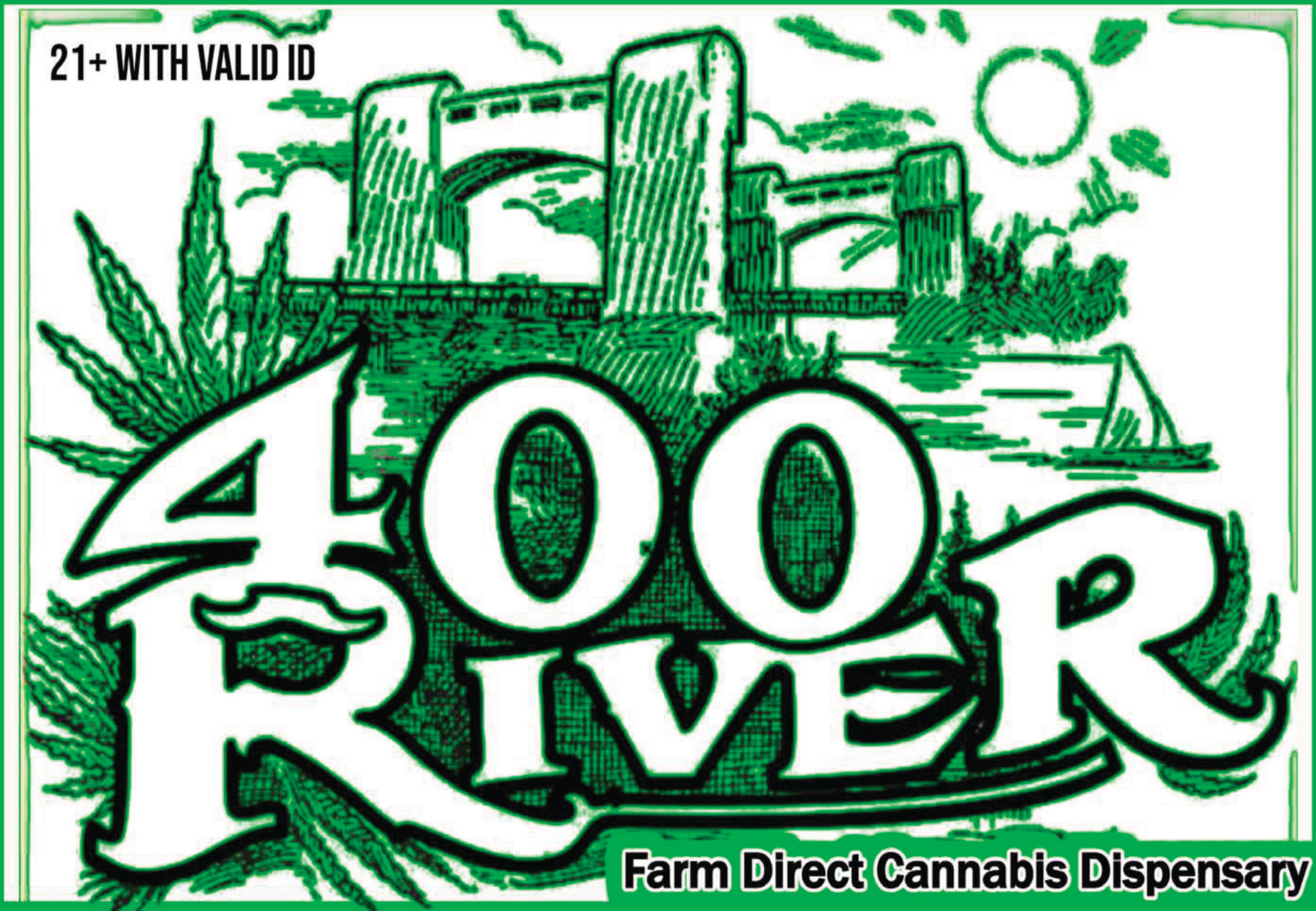

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